



# THE ART BULLETIN

A QUARTERLY  
PUBLISHED BY THE COLLEGE ART ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

DECEMBER 1956  
VOLUME XXXVIII  
NUMBER FOUR



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Subscriptions for THE ART BULLETIN should be sent to the College Art Association of America at 432 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N.Y. The price of THE ART BULLETIN is three dollars a number, twelve dollars a year.

Articles and monographs for the new Supplement series should be addressed to the Editor of THE ART BULLETIN, Department of Art, University of California, Berkeley 4, Cal.; books for review should be addressed to the Book Review Editor, College Art Association, 432 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N.Y. Before submitting manuscripts, authors are requested to consult the "Notes for Contributors" printed in the March issue.

Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at New York, N.Y., October 24, 1925, under the Act of March 3, 1879; additional entry at the Post Office at Princeton, New Jersey, November 3, 1948.



# THE ART BULLETIN

DECEMBER 1956

The Role of the Virgin in Giotto's <i>Last Judgment</i>	DOROTHY C. SHORR	207
St. Andrew in the Work of Tilmann Riemenschneider	JUSTUS BIER	215
Theatrum Mundi	RICHARD BERNHEIMER	225
The Drawings of Stradanus (Jan van der Straeten) in The Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration, New York	MICHEL N. BENISOVICH	249
BOOK REVIEWS		
L. A. Mayer, <i>Islamic Architects and their Works</i>	DONALD N. WILBER	253
Olexa Powstenko, <i>The Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev</i>	CYRIL MANGO	253
Rudolf Wittkower, <i>The Sculptures of Gian Lorenzo Bernini</i>	IRVING LAVIN	255
Talbot Hamlin, <i>Benjamin Henry Latrobe</i>	PAUL F. NORTON	260
LIST OF BOOKS RECEIVED		265
INDEX TO VOLUME XXXVIII		267



# THE ROLE OF THE VIRGIN IN GIOTTO'S *LAST JUDGMENT*

DOROTHY C. SHORR

GIOTTO's fresco representing the Last Judgment (Fig. 1), covers the entire west wall of the Arena Chapel in Padua. Although it thus occupies the conventional place assigned to this subject in Byzantine churches, and although the composition is based on the conventional Byzantine formula, the event is represented in a new way and reveals a number of new aspects, some of which are unique. It will be shown that these new aspects have their literary origin in early Byzantine legend and that the unique way in which the event is represented reflects the personal requirements of the donor of the chapel who commissioned Giotto to decorate its walls.

In the first place, Giotto has eliminated the horizontal bands that divide the Byzantine composition into strips,<sup>1</sup> and has discarded the separate compartments in which various episodes of the Last Judgment are usually represented.<sup>2</sup> Instead, the entire scene has now been unified and the action develops in a sweeping upward and downward rhythm.

A second innovation is the emphasis upon the groups of the Blessed at the right of Christ seated in judgment, contrasting with the almost summary way in which the Damned are represented at the left of the throne. The Elect are shown as large individual figures, climbing upward to Paradise, whereas, at the left, the Damned and the devils (with the exception of Satan himself), are seen as diminutive and unemotional figures precipitated downward into Hell in the fiery river of Byzantine tradition. The almost objective aspect of the latter scene is enhanced by the absence of the customary avenging angels enthusiastically driving the Damned to their doom. Lacking, too, are the sadistic details with which the artist commonly represents the various tortures of Hell with the intention of striking terror into the heart of the beholder. Instead, the fate of the lost souls seems inexorable and comparatively remote in spite of the activity of the little figures themselves and the naturalistic way in which they are represented. Borne downward by the rushing river of fire, they seem to be entirely unperceived by all the other participants in the event of the Last Judgment; only the left hand of Christ, turned downward in a gesture of rejection, and the anger reflected on his brow, reveal his awareness of these souls condemned to eternal punishment. The Savior's beneficent attention is concentrated upon the mounting rows of the Blessed at the right of the throne. It is toward them that his body, head, and glance are directed, toward them that his right hand is extended in a gesture of acceptance and welcome.

The most unusual feature, however, of this right side of the *Last Judgment* is the commanding figure of the Virgin, together with her action and the position that she occupies among the Elect, halfway between Heaven and earth (Fig. 2). For her regal form, isolated by her height and by the mandorla in which she seems to float, dominates the entire right side of the scene and is second in size only to that of Christ himself; while her action, as she turns her head to gaze downward with an expression of noble compassion at the kneeling figure whose arm she grasps, emphasizes in a particular way her close relationship to mankind and the intimate role that she plays in its salvation at the Day of Judgment.

1. The only remains of these strips are seen in the platform upon which the apostles are seated. But Giotto has curved the ends in a new way to give a sense of depth to these seated groups.

2. A somewhat similar unification of the scene is met with on the four pulpits of Niccolo and of Giovanni Pisano (two in Pisa, one in Siena and one in Pistoia). This, however, may be due in part to exigencies of space.

This position of the Virgin among the Elect, halfway between Heaven and earth,<sup>3</sup> differs from that of the usual Eastern and Western representations of the Last Judgment. These show her standing, kneeling, or seated at the right of the throne, her hands raised in prayer as she intercedes for the salvation of mankind, while John the Baptist occupies a similar place at the left of the throne.<sup>4</sup> Giotto has omitted this representation of the Deïsis, placing the emphasis not on this customary formal act of intercession but on the relationship between the Virgin and those who look to her for their salvation.

To understand the idea underlying this unique representation of the Last Judgment, it is necessary to examine the history both of the Arena Chapel, for which the fresco was painted, and of Enrico Scrovegni, the donor who built it and commissioned Giotto to adorn its walls with scenes from the life of the Virgin and of Christ.

When the donor of a church or chapel dedicated his gift to Christ, to the Virgin, or to the titular saint, he probably did so with the implied, sometimes expressed, hope that they would remember him favorably at the Day of Judgment.<sup>5</sup>

Enrico Scrovegni was undoubtedly animated by this hope. A wealthy citizen of Padua, he had inherited a large and ill-gotten fortune from his father Reginaldo, a wealthy and unscrupulous usurer whom Dante had placed in the seventh circle of Inferno.<sup>6</sup> It is therefore not unlikely that when Enrico acquired for private family use the chapel adjoining his new palace, he did so chiefly in the hope of expiating his father's crimes. This probability is, at any rate, reenforced by Scardeone's statement in 1560 that Scrovegni erected the chapel "pro eripienda patris anima a poenis purgationis et ad illius expianda peccata."<sup>7</sup>

This little church, which stood on the site of an earlier one dedicated to S. Maria Annunziata, is situated in what was originally a Roman arena. Scrovegni rebuilt it as his private chapel ca. 1303.<sup>8</sup> He rededicated it to S. Maria della Carità, this word having the contemporary connotation of Divine Love or Compassion, the Latin equivalent being *misericordia* or *commiseratio*.<sup>9</sup> Thus, by the early fourteenth century, a number of names had come to be connected with the little Paduan church; not only was it known as S. Maria Annunziata and S. Maria della Carità, but it was further identified as S. Maria della Rena from the Roman amphitheater in which it stood.<sup>10</sup> At the beginning of the fourteenth century, however, it seems to have been known chiefly by its new name of S. Maria della Carità, for Scrovegni in his will refers to "ecclesia Sancte Marie de caritate de l'arena de Padua" when requesting that his body be placed in the apse of this chapel.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, a contemporary Paduan chronicler, Giovanni da Nonno, refers to "Henricus de Scrovegnis . . . fecit etiam fieri ecclesiam sancte Marie a Caritate in loco Arena,"<sup>12</sup> while a papal bull

3. For the motif of the Virgin standing among the Blessed, see R. Offner, *Corpus of Florentine Painting*, New York, 1947, III, sec. V, p. 257 n. 15.

4. Occasionally John the Evangelist may replace the Baptist, especially in Gothic sculpture from the thirteenth century onward. See O. Gillen, *Ikonographische Studien zum Hortus Deliciarum*, Berlin, 1931, pp. 10-11.

5. The motif of the Roman emperor presenting a temple to a pagan divinity is probably first represented in Asia Minor (G. J. Elderkin, "A note on a Mosaic in Hagia Sofia," *Art in America*, January 1938, pp. 28-31). The earliest representations of a donor offering a church to Christ or to the Virgin date from the sixth century and may be seen in S. Vitale, Ravenna, in Parenzo, and in S. Lorenzo fuori le Mura, Rome. Here the hope of salvation would seem to be implicit. But in the twelfth century, Suger, the outspoken abbot of St.-Denis, explicitly utters the hope that he will receive the benefits that he considers his due. Inscribed on the door was the following prayer: "For the splendor of the church that has fostered and exalted him, Suger has labored for the splendor of the church. Giving Thee a share of what is Thine, O Martyr Denis, he prays that he may obtain a share of Paradise." Elsewhere is

inscribed: "Receive, O stern Judge, the prayers of Thy Suger; grant that I be mercifully numbered among Thine own sheep." (E. Panofsky, *Abbot Suger . . .*, Princeton, 1946, pp. 47, 49.)

6. *Inf.* CXVII, vv. 64ff.

7. A. Moschetti, *The Scrovegni Chapel . . .*, Florence, 1907, p. 12.

8. *ibid.*, pp. 16-19.

9. *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca*, Florence, 1729, I, p. 568.

10. Whether churches at this period were frequently dedicated to S. Maria della Carità, it is impossible to say. Today, they appear to be extremely rare and I am unable to find a reference to any. Although contemporary documents refer to the chapel by its new name, this evidently was not permanently accepted and by the next century, Ghiberti reverts to the earlier form: "la chiesa della Rena di Padova" (*I Commentari*, II, 3, ed. J. von Schlosser, *Lorenzo Ghiberti's Denkwürdigkeiten*, Berlin, 1912, I, p. 36); while an eighteenth century guidebook, *Le cose più notabile di Padova*, Padua, 1791, p. 34, refers to the chapel as "S. S. Annunziata dell'Arena."

11. Moschetti, *op.cit.*, p. 25.

12. I. B. Supino, *Giotto*, Florence, 1920, p. 137.



of Benedict XI informs us that this pope, on March 1, 1304, granted indulgences "pro visitantibus ecclesiam b. Mariae Virginis de Caritate de Arena, civitatis Paduae."<sup>13</sup>

But although the new chapel had been dedicated to S. Maria della Carità (obviously for personal reasons), the Annunciate Virgin seems to have remained a titular saint of the new church. This may well be due to the fact that the former church of S. Maria Annunziata in the Arena had always played an important part in the lives of the citizens of Padua, having long been connected with the official celebration of the Feast of the Annunciation. This included a procession of ecclesiastics, leading citizens and townspeople to the Arena, where a mystery play representing the event of the Annunciation was performed before the church. Although this festival was suspended between the years 1300 and 1306, the period during which Scrovegni's chapel was being rebuilt, it was then resumed and continued to be a public event of special importance.<sup>14</sup> Thus, in spite of the private nature of his chapel, upon which Scrovegni frequently insists,<sup>15</sup> the little church nevertheless appears to have also maintained its public character. Further evidence that S. Maria Annunziata retained her patronage of the new chapel in spite of its dedication to S. Maria della Carità, is seen in the fact that the foundation and consecration of this new church were celebrated on March 25, the Feast of the Annunciation.<sup>16</sup> The same tradition is undoubtedly reflected in the prominence given by Giotto to the scene of the Annunciation on the apsidal arch of the chapel, as well as to the figure of the Annunciate in the donor group of the *Last Judgment*.

In the lower part of the fresco of the *Last Judgment* and forming an important element of the composition, Giotto has drawn a group of five figures, one of whom represents Enrico Scrovegni, together with a monk whose name still remains undetermined (Fig. 3). Both men kneel before three standing figures with haloes, whose identity has been variously interpreted, from Selvatico's "tre donne" in 1859<sup>17</sup> to Toesca's "Madonna and the pensive saints" some seventy years later.<sup>18</sup> Only Supino has, I believe, identified these three standing figures correctly although, apparently, unconvincingly since subsequent writers ignore or reject his interpretation. "Here we have in the center," writes Supino, "the Queen of Heaven, the crowned Virgin; at her right the archangel Gabriel the Annunciator, at the left the Annunciate Virgin. Thus the three figures illustrate the two titular saints of the church: S. Maria Annunziata and S. Maria della Carità."<sup>19</sup> It will be seen not only that Supino is probably correct in his interpretation of this central figure as S. Maria della Carità but also that it is just this compassionate aspect of the Virgin that plays such a dominant role in Giotto's representation of the *Last Judgment*.

Of the five figures comprising the group, that of the donor, Enrico Scrovegni, is represented as the most important, reflecting a new and more direct relationship between man and the Deity than had previously obtained.

His large figure emerges from the blue background and is almost isolated from the rest of the group composed of the three celestial figures and the kneeling monk who supports the chapel. It will be noted that Scrovegni performs two separate yet evidently related actions: with his right hand, he offers the chapel to the outer standing figure, that of S. Maria Annunziata, the original patron saint, who rests her hand in a proprietary manner upon its roof as she accepts the building and looks down at the donor. Scrovegni also raises his left hand toward the tall central figure of S. Maria della Carità, who graciously extends her right hand in token of acceptance. The

13. *ibid.*, p. 118.

14. Moschetti, *op.cit.*, pp. 12-14, 19.

15. *ibid.*, p. 24.

16. C. H. Weigelt, *Giotto*, Berlin, 1925, p. xiv.

17. P. E. Selvatico, *Scritti d'arte*, Florence, 1859, p. 257.

18. P. Toesca, *Florentine Painting of the Trecento*, New York, 1929, p. 32. These three figures have also been identified as: three theological Virtues with Charity in the center (Moschetti, *op.cit.*, pp. 62-64); the Queen of Heaven with St. John at her right and possibly a patron saint at her left (A. Venturi,

*Storia dell'arte italiana*, Milan, 1907, v, p. 393); three celestial figures (F. Rintelen, *Giotto und die Giotto-Apokryphen*, Munich, 1912, p. 106); the central figure probably the Virgin of the Annunciation, Gabriel at her right and the third figure is not to be identified (Weigelt, *op.cit.*, p. xli); the central figure is Mary, the patroness of the church, Gabriel at her right, the name of the other saint is unknown (H. Thode, *Giotto*, Bielefeld, 1926, p. 122 n. 49).

19. Supino, *op.cit.*, pp. 137-138 (and 1927 edition, p. 60).

peculiar significance of this gesture is emphasized by the proximity of the two hands, dramatically isolated against the blue background, as they emerge from the cubic density of the bodies, while the complete profile of the two heads further accentuates the immediacy of the relationship. The Virgin, with an expression of noble benevolence, inclines her head slightly toward the suppliant who kneels before her and gazes up into her face with parted lips that almost suggest speech. Because of this close physical and psychological relationship between the figures of Scrovegni and of S. Maria della Carità, these gestures of supplication and acceptance seem to be of primary importance, whereas the giving and the receiving of the chapel appears, in comparison, almost a perfunctory act.

On the far side, and as a pendant to the Annunciate Virgin, stands Gabriel, his lowered glance and folded arms proclaiming his limited participation in the event. Indeed, his appearance here would seem to be due only to his connection with the Annunciate; nor would it be easy to identify her in this posture without his presence. For the figures of the Annunciate and of the Archangel Gabriel in this group differ from those of the same two figures in the scene of the Annunciation which Giotto has painted on the apsidal arch of the Arena Chapel. Although the standing Annunciate of the group wears a blue mantle, her gold-bordered robe of white and the jeweled coronet are similar to those worn by the young Virgin in the scenes of her Presentation in the Temple (here her youth precludes the diadem), her Marriage and her Return from the Temple; whereas the kneeling Virgin in the scene of the Annunciation is clad in a crimson gown embroidered in gold, her hair worn in a coronet of braids. The standing Gabriel of the group, with his lightly-indicated beard and mustache and his square-cut hair, differs greatly from the kneeling archangel of the Annunciation, with his youthful face and wavy locks parted in the center and surmounted by a diadem.

The tall central figure of the group, presumed to be that of S. Maria della Carità, is clad in a white robe beneath a crimson tunic embroidered with a gold rectangular design across the breast. Similarly clad, the Virgin is also shown in a number of scenes of Giotto's fresco cycle—the *Annunciation* (as mentioned above), the *Visitation*, the *Nativity*, the *Adoration of the Magi*, and the *Flight into Egypt*. The first two scenes show the Virgin with her hair worn in a coronet of braids, while in the three later scenes a blue mantle partly or completely covers her head. The Virgin of the donor group, however, for the first time wears a jeweled crown over a transparent veil, proclaiming her Queen of Heaven. It is thus evident that the attire of the sacred figures represented in Giotto's fresco cycle must not be interpreted too narrowly nor used too rigidly as a means of identification.

There can, however, be little doubt that the central crowned figure is represented again higher up on the same wall at the head of the Blessed and that both these tall, regal figures represent the Virgin to whom Scrovegni dedicated his chapel—S. Maria della Carità. Moschetti<sup>20</sup> has recognized this identity, while Foratti<sup>21</sup> observes that the central figure of the donor group wears the same dress as does the Virgin represented above but that their crowns are different. The crown of the upper Virgin has, however, been repainted and traces of a wider jeweled band are still visible.

Although the Virgin's regal figure dominates the entire group of the Blessed as they ascend to Heaven, she is isolated from them by the mandorla in which she stands and by the five angels who surround her. The only figure included in this separate group is a kneeling female personage clad in a mantle, whose arm the Virgin grasps as she gazes downward into her face.

Who is this personage—and a woman at that—who receives such special attention? She has

20. Moschetti, *op.cit.*, p. 63.

21. A. Foratti, "Il Giudizio universale di Giotto in Padova," *Boll. d'arte*, ser. II, vol. I, no. 2, p. 62.





1. Giotto, *Last Judgment*. Padua, Arena Chapel (photo: Anderson)



2-3. Giotto, *Last Judgment*, details (photo: Anderson)





4. Giovanni Pisano, *Last Judgment*, right half. Pisa, Cathedral  
(photo: Alinari)



5. Giovanni Pisano, *Last Judgment*, left half. Pisa, Cathedral  
(photo: Alinari)



6. Giovanni Pisano, *Last Judgment*. Pistoia, S. Andrea (photo: Alinari)



7. Roman School, early XIV century, *Last Judgment*. Toscanella, S. Maria Maggiore (photo: Alinari)



8. Fol. 59r



9. Detail of fol. 61v

8-9. School of Paris, ca. 1320-1350, *Les Miracles Notre Dame* by Gautier de Coincy, Bibl. Nat., nouv. acq. fr. 24541



been interpreted as St. Anne, mother of the Virgin,<sup>22</sup> but there seems to be no foundation for this opinion. May she not represent Eve? Indeed, the posture of the Virgin in a mandorla who grasps the arm of this kneeling woman undoubtedly recalls that of Christ at the mouth of Hell who grasps the arm of Adam and draws him forth from Limbo.<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, the antithesis between Eve and Mary, "the new Eve," is frequently discussed by writers from the second century onward. "As Eve," says St. Irenaeus, "by her disobedience was the cause of death for herself and the human race, so Mary, by her obedience, becomes for herself and the human race, the instrument of salvation."<sup>24</sup> And, as St. Jerome expresses it, "Mors per Evam, vita per Mariam."<sup>25</sup>

This Virgin standing among the Blessed is seen here not as their leader, as she is sometimes described,<sup>26</sup> since her nearly frontal posture, with head and glance directed backward, seems to halt the upward-surging figures. Nor is she the *Mediatrice*, for physically and psychologically she is unrelated to the figure of Christ seated above. But in the role of S. Maria della Carità standing among her servants, she seems to embody the very essence of protectiveness and heavenly love by virtue of her commanding figure and the concentration of her compassionate gaze.

Climbing upward toward the Virgin, their hands raised in prayer, their glances directed toward her, comes a band of haloed figures, undoubtedly patriarchs and saints. Among this group, most of whom are bearded and clad in long mantles, the figure of Moses may be distinguished; but the ruined condition of the fresco on this part of the west wall prevents further identification. The male and female figures in the ranks below have no haloes and many wear contemporary attire. They look upward and extend their hands in prayer, with the exception of St. Stephen Protomartyr who emerges at the head of the throng and looks downward at the figure of the kneeling Scrovegni.

The angels who marshal these lower ranks of the Blessed have been compared with the similar angels of Cavallini's *Last Judgment* in S. Cecilia in Trastevere,<sup>27</sup> but they are closer to the angels of the Cavallinesque *Last Judgment* in S. Maria in Vescovio, Stimigliano, since they stand at the back of the continuous rows of figures instead of leading each separate group. In spite of this similarity, however, these two Cavallinesque frescoes are very different in composition from the Arena *Last Judgment* and show the Virgin in her usual place at the right of the throne.

The enormous, almost menacing Christ of Giotto's fresco shows a particular interest in the Blessed who mount toward him. His body is turned slightly in their direction as he sits on the rainbow mandorla, his right foot touching it. Head and glance are inclined to the right toward his Mother and the throng behind her climbing upward; and though his expression is one of anger, the *faccia dura* to which Jacopone da Todi refers,<sup>28</sup> his extended right hand with its welcoming gesture proclaims that his Mother's prayers have prevailed. His left hand turned downward toward the Damned is the only visible sign of his recognition of their presence, unlike his attitude in the latter part of the century when his entire attention is bestowed upon them in anger and in denunciation.<sup>29</sup>

This motif of the Virgin standing among the Blessed in the scene of the Last Judgment is not often represented,<sup>30</sup> and still rarer is the motif, seen in the Arena fresco, of the Virgin among the Blessed who is completely unrelated to the Divine Judge, her whole attention being bestowed upon the Elect among whom she stands. Indeed, the only other representation of this motif known

22. P. Jessen, *Die Darstellung der Weltgerichte bis auf Michelangelo*, Berlin, 1883, p. 43; A. Foratti, *loc.cit.*; H. Thode, *Giotto*, Bielefeld, 1926, p. 122.

23. As, for instance, in the scene above the *Last Judgment* in Torcello. The relationship between the Descent into Limbo and the Last Judgment is discussed by W. Paeseler, "Die Römische Weltgerichtstafel," *Kunstgeschichtliches Jahrbuch der Bibl. Hertziana*, Leipzig, 1938, II, p. 336.

24. *Contr. Haereses*, III, cap. XXII, 4; V, cap. XIX, 1 (Migne, *Patr. gr.*, Paris, 1857, VII, cols. 958ff.; 1157).

25. Letter to Eustochium (no. XXII), *Selection and Letters of St. Jerome*, London, 1933, p. 98.

26. J.-C. Broussolle, *Les fresques de l'Arena à Padoue*, Paris, 1905, p. 187; F. Rintelen, *Giotto und die Giotto-Apokryphen*, Munich, 1912, p. 110.

27. W. Paeseler, *op.cit.*, p. 371.

28. See M. Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death*, Princeton, 1951, p. 76 n. 13.

29. *ibid.*, p. 76.

30. See note 3 above.

to me occurs on the pulpit of Pisa Cathedral, executed by Giovanni Pisano between the years 1301 and 1310 and thus contemporary with Giotto's fresco dating from ca. 1305.<sup>31</sup> And because it is now apparent that this Pisan *Last Judgment* illustrates episodes from a Byzantine apocalypse describing the Virgin's descent into Purgatory, a brief outline of the legend may throw some light on the motifs represented both here and in Padua.

According to this Greek narrative, which dates from the eighth-ninth century,<sup>32</sup> the Virgin asks the Archangel Michael to show her the torments of the Damned, whereupon he conducts her to Purgatory. Here she sees men and women being tortured for various sins, a river of fire filled with souls in torment, and they proceed onward to further scenes of still greater punishment. Finally, feeling that this severity is excessive, the Virgin asks Michael to collect all the angels to implore Christ for clemency. Michael replies that in spite of their prayers, Christ refuses forgiveness. The Virgin then demands to be carried to the Divine Throne where she asks her Son's forgiveness for the sinners. "How shall I pardon them," asks Christ, "when I see these nail holes in my hands?" The Virgin replies: "I ask for Christians, not infidels." "But they have not kept my commandments," says Christ. Seeing herself powerless to move him, the Virgin then calls to her aid Moses, the Prophets, apostles, martyrs, etc. "If your Son will not listen to you," cry the sinners, "show him the stable where you gave him birth, the breasts that nourished him, the arms that held him." Finally, Christ relents, saying: "For the love of my immaculate Mother, I will give rest to the Damned from the day of my Resurrection until All Saints' Day." This legend thus serves to emphasize the efficacy of the Virgin's power to intercede with her Son for the salvation of mankind when all other means have failed.

Some of the episodes described in this legend are illustrated by Giovanni Pisano, whose *Last Judgment*, as has been said above, represents the Virgin wearing a crown and veil, standing among the Blessed toward whom she turns (Fig. 4). Kneeling figures cling to her, imploring her aid while, with her right hand, she grasps the arm of an elderly prelate with a gesture similar to that of Giotto's Virgin in the Arena *Last Judgment*. At her side stands an archangel, presumably the Michael who accompanies her in the legend. To the left of Christ, just below St. John interceding at the throne,<sup>33</sup> stands another figure of the crowned Virgin (Fig. 5), her right hand stretched out imploringly to her Son, while with her left she bares "the breast that nourished him," perhaps the first instance of this gesture that is so frequently represented during the latter part of the fourteenth century, although usually in a somewhat different manner.<sup>34</sup> Again an imploring figure clings to the Virgin and again she is guarded by an archangel.

31. Expressing a similar idea but treated in an entirely different manner is the scene of the Last Judgment on the façade of S. Jouin-de-Marnes. This twelfth century sculpture shows the figure of the Virgin standing on a plane below Christ seated in majesty. Kneeling figures implore her mercy while others approach in single file. The right hand of Christ designates the Virgin below and she repeats this gesture.

32. See C. A. Gidel, "Étude sur une apocalypse de la Vierge Marie," *Annuaire de l'Association pour l'encouragement des études grecques en France*, Paris, 1871, p. 108. Gidel publishes the Greek texts of two early (eighth? and late tenth century) incomplete manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale (Mss gr. 390 and 1631) and gives an abstract rather than a literal translation of their contents. The same procedure is followed by E. Pernot, "Descente de la Vierge aux enfers d'après les mss. grecs de Paris," *Revue des études grecques*, 1900, XIII, pp. 233-257. He publishes the Greek text of another incomplete manuscript (Suppl. gr. 136) dating from the sixteenth century, supplementing it with a complete and very late manuscript from Chios. Although all these manuscripts contain slight differences, the basic legend of the Virgin's descent into Hell remains unchanged; while the large number that have survived point to the continuing popularity of the legend. For

the development of this apocalypse, see M. Vloberg, *La Vierge notre Médiatrice*, Grenoble, 1938, pp. 210-219.

33. The Virgin interceding at the throne stands at the right of Christ (Fig. 4). She is thus represented three times in this scene of the Last Judgment. The Torcello *Last Judgment* also shows her three times but there her gesture is always one of intercession.

34. An elaboration of this action showing the Virgin baring her breast to her Son while Christ shows his wounds to God the Father is described by Erwin Panofsky ("Imago Pietatis," *Festschrift für Max Friedländer*, Leipzig, 1927, p. 307), as an act of "double intercession." It is illustrated in Chapter 39 of *Speculum humanae salvationis* (ca. 1324); and perhaps the earliest altarpiece is that by the late fourteenth century Florentine master, Niccolò di Pietro Gerini. This painting on cloth, now in The Cloisters, New York, is the subject of an article by Millard Meiss in the *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, XII, no. 10, June, 1954, pp. 302-317. The mystical act represented by this picture has its literary origin in the writings of Arnaldus of Chartres (*Libellus de laudibus B. Mariae Virginis*, Migne, *Patr. lat.*, Paris, 1854, vol. 189, col. 1726), who says: "Securum accessum jam habet homo ad Deum, ubi mediatorem causae suae Filium habet ante Patrem, et ante



Other representations of the Virgin standing among the Blessed in the scene of the Last Judgment differ somewhat from those in Pisa and in Padua since they show her related not only to her devotees but also to the enthroned Christ above.

Perhaps the earliest instance of this variation is met with once again in the sculpture of Giovanni Pisano.<sup>35</sup> His *Last Judgment* carved on the pulpit of S. Andrea, Pistoia, and dating from 1298-1301, shows a crowned Virgin surrounded by kneeling and praying figures (Fig. 6); she looks upward toward the seated Christ to whom she extends her left hand, which nearly touches his lowered right.<sup>36</sup>

All these representations of the Last Judgment showing the Virgin among the Blessed have omitted the figure of John the Baptist in his role of co-intercessor.<sup>37</sup> John, however, is represented in a fresco of the Last Judgment painted in the church of S. Maria Maggiore, Toscanella (Fig. 7), and derived from Giotto's composition in Padua. Here the Virgin stands upon the rocky ground and looks upward at Christ in glory, her arm protectively around the shoulders of an elderly female figure, while behind her stands John the Baptist in a similar posture, recommending an aged man with a long beard. Bearing in mind the tentative identification of the kneeling female figure in the Arena *Last Judgment*, it is tempting to identify these two aged figures as Adam and Eve.<sup>38</sup>

It has been suggested above that all these representations of the Last Judgment which show the Virgin standing among the Blessed in a zone between Heaven and earth reflect the Byzantine legend of her descent into Purgatory and her conversations with its inhabitants. The Western Church, however, sees no reason for admitting a corporeal descent of the Virgin into Purgatory and holds that she can help her servants there without leaving her place in Heaven.<sup>39</sup> Yet if Church writers do not refer in specific terms to this corporeal descent, secular literature, especially in France during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, abounds in such descriptions showing the miraculous indulgence of the Virgin toward individual sinners and her personal intercession on their behalf.<sup>40</sup> Like the Byzantine legend which they undoubtedly reflect, these *contes-dévots* tell of the Virgin's descent into Purgatory to rescue, in one instance, a repentant nun from the very jaws of Hell (Fig. 8) or, again, describe her in Heaven where, kneeling at the throne of Christ and baring her breast, she implores her Son for mercy toward a dishonest knight who would build a monastery in her honor but dies unshriven (Fig. 9).<sup>41</sup> This same Byzantine legend is again reflected in another tale, the *Cour de Paradis*, which describes a purgatorial kingdom for

Filium matrem. Christus, nudato latere, Patri ostendit latus et vulnera; Maria Christo pectus et ubera; nec potest ullo modo esse repulsa, ubi concurrunt et orant omni lingua disertius haec clementiae monumenta et charitatis insignia." This example of the power of prayer is often referred to by mediaeval writers; while Panofsky points out (p. 286 n. 75) that the idea of the mother showing her breast to her son to soften his anger can be traced back through Latin literature to Homer.

35. The motif of the Virgin standing on a plane below Heaven and looking up at Christ, to whom she raises her hand, is seen in an eleventh century panel of the Last Judgment in the Vatican Museum, Rome. Here, however, she is not related to the figures of the Blessed behind her.

36. A fifteenth century instance of this motif is met with in a *Last Judgment* attributed to Martin Schongauer by E. Laforge, *La Vierge*, Lyon, 1844, p. 310, but not otherwise identifiable. According to this author, the painting shows a vengeful God the Father seated near his Son. The Virgin, standing at the front of the composition, looks up at Christ with an expression of tender supplication, interceding for the sinners who kneel imploringly at her feet, their gaze fixed upon her.

37. Except in the case of the Pisa Pulpit where a number of traditions are combined, and the Virgin, as has been pointed out (note 33 above), is shown three times in the same scene.

38. It must be admitted that the female figure in Toscanella, unlike the bearded patriarch, has no halo; but these do not seem to have been consistently bestowed here. A similar inconsistency is to be noted in a tenth century Byzantine ivory of Christ's descent into Limbo, which shows Adam without a halo and Eve standing next to him with a halo (A. Goldschmidt, *Die byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, Berlin, 1930, II, fig. 41a). The motif of Christ grasping the wrists of both Adam and Eve in this scene is very common in Byzantine painting from the early fourteenth century onward; see, for example, G. Millet, *Monuments d'Athos*, Paris, 1927, I, pl. 85, 3; 129, 1.

39. See the article on the Virgin Mary by E. Dublanchy in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, ed. A. Vacant and E. Magenot, Paris, 1927, IX<sup>2</sup>, col. 2462.

40. The history of the development of Mariolatry and of the miracles performed by the Virgin is traced by Comte A. de Laborde in chapters 1 and 2 of *Les miracles de Notre Dame compilés par Jehan Miélot*, Paris, 1929. The author also gives a bibliography of the compilations of these legends from the early twelfth to the late fourteenth century (pp. 4-5, 15-17).

41. Gautier de Coincy, *Les Miracles de la sainte Vierge*, ed. abbé Poquet, Paris, 1857, cols. 474-480, 493-500.

whose inhabitants the Virgin obtains a short respite from torture by appealing to her Son with the same maternal gesture.<sup>42</sup>

Hence, although the idea of such a physical and personal relationship between the Virgin and her devotees was not officially recognized by the Church, pictorial representations and secular writings of the Middle Ages suggest that this Byzantine tradition had been incorporated over the years into popular mediaeval thought and had become part of its current beliefs.

It is in this tradition, it would seem, that Giotto's *Last Judgment* has its roots. Moreover, the reason for this choice becomes apparent when it is recalled that the Arena Chapel was privately owned by Enrico Scrovegni whose personal tastes would, therefore, undoubtedly be reflected in the program for its decoration. Since this church, dedicated to S. Maria della Carità, was built as an act of expiation for the sins of the donor's father (he who had been consigned to Hell by Dante), it is appropriate that the emphasis in this particular representation of the Last Judgment should be placed upon the idea of Salvation rather than upon the terrors of Damnation which were usually stressed, and that so much importance should be given to the figure of the Virgin as an active participant in this work of mercy. Indeed, she so dominates the right half of the composition that this scene of the Last Judgment almost assumes the character of a setting for her glorification.

And as the *Last Judgment* glorifies the figure of S. Maria della Carità, to whom the new chapel was dedicated, so, on the opposite wall, the *Annunciation*, by virtue of its size and prominent position on the apsidal arch, glorifies S. Maria Annunziata, to whom the earlier church had been dedicated and whose continuing connection with the new chapel has already been discussed.

Moreover, while the action of this latter scene moves implicitly in a downward direction, as God the Father instructs the Archangel Gabriel to descend to earth with his fateful message, so the action of the *Last Judgment* emphasizes the upward-surfing movement of the Blessed as they ascend from earth to Heaven, through the intervention of the Virgin. Thus these two events, *Annunciation* and *Last Judgment*, symbolizing the beginning and the end, serve to glorify the Virgin, "the New Eve," as the instrument of Incarnation and Redemption.

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42. Published in *Fabliaux ou contes . . . du XII et du XIII siècle*, ed. P. J. B. Legrand d'Aussy, Paris, 1929, v, pp. 66-78. In Italy, among the *Laude drammatiche* of Perugia (*Laude drammatiche e rappresentazioni sacre*, ed. V. de Bartholomaeis, Florence, 1943, I, p. 44), is a dialogue between the Virgin and her Son to whom she speaks as follows: "Nove mese te portaie/ en lo mio ventre verginello/ a quiste poppe t'alataie/ mentre foste piccoletto;/ io si te priego, se esser puote,/ che la sentenza tu revoche." This is similar to a passage in *L'Advocacie Notre-Dame*, an early fourteenth century poem at-

tributed to Jean de Justice, canon of Bayeux (ed A. Chassant, Paris, 1855, pp. 38-39). Here the Virgin, fighting for mankind against the power of the Devil, appeals to her Son in these terms: ". . . beau douz Fils, je suy ta Mere/ Qui te portey IX mois entiers./ Tu me dois oïr volentiers . . ./ Beau Filz, regarde les mamelles/ De quoy aleitier te souloie,/ Et ces mains donc bien te savoie/ Souef remuer et berchier. . . ." Here the Virgin appeals to her Son not only with "the breast that nourished him" of the Byzantine legend, but also with "the arms that held him."

# ST. ANDREW IN THE WORK OF TILMANN RIEMENSCHNEIDER

JUSTUS BIER

THREE statues of St. Andrew by Tilmann Riemenschneider have hitherto been known: the stone statue in the Würzburg Cathedral from Riemenschneider's workshop (Figs. 1-2); the lindenwood statue in the altarpiece of the Twelve Apostles in the Kurpfälzische Museum, Heidelberg, which after removal of its coat of paint proved to be a work by the master (Figs. 5-7); and the painted wooden statue that disappeared from the chapel of the Ehehaltenhaus in Würzburg. The last can be evaluated from the photograph with some probability as also a work of the master (Fig. 3). A fourth statue of St. Andrew by Riemenschneider's hand, an unpainted lindenwood sculpture in the collection of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, so far unpublished, will be introduced here (Figs. 8-10). Yet before we discuss this statue, we will have to study the other three, since that has never been done with any degree of thoroughness. Through such a comparative study a new insight into Riemenschneider's development during the first decade of the sixteenth century can be gained. Our aim is also to show how a Late Gothic sculptor like Riemenschneider no longer conceives a figure as a fixed type, but allows himself a certain latitude in interpretation, and is inclined to explore the schemes the type permits. Of the three statues previously known, two are fully documented works. These will be discussed first.

## I

The stone statue in Würzburg Cathedral (Figs. 1-2)<sup>1</sup> is part of a series of statues of the twelve apostles, St. John the Baptist, and Christ. The fourteen statues were carved from white Main sandstone in Riemenschneider's workshop between 1500 and 1506. They were ordered by the City Council for its chapel, the Marienkapelle on the Grüner Markt in Würzburg, for ten guilders apiece. This sum was paid for the labor of the sculptor only, since the stone had been delivered from the municipal quarry and the statues were put in place by the millmaster and his assistants at the Council's expense. The statue had been ordered to adorn one of fourteen niches in the buttresses of the west, south, and east sides of the chapel, those seen from the surrounding square. The niches had been left unadorned even after the fabric of the building, begun in 1377, was brought to completion with the finishing of the tower in 1479.<sup>2</sup>

During the last weeks of the year 1506 the figure of St. Andrew was placed in one of the niches of the south side, the fourth from the west, or the fifth counting the niche at the southwest corner. It stood there until 1843-1853, when the Chapel of Our Lady underwent a thorough restoration. The statues were taken down and according to Carl Becker's testimony "awkwardly restored and under the eyes of the director of works even worked over with the chisel."<sup>3</sup> Becker, who minced no words, declared that the statues were "ruined through the vandalism of a so-called restoration."<sup>4</sup>

About forty years later the statues of St. Andrew, St. John the Evangelist, St. Peter, Christ, and St. John the Baptist, were again taken down and this time replaced by copies. Four of the

1. Sandstone. Height ca. 182 cm (72"). Cf. Justus Bier, *Tilmann Riemenschneider, Die Reifen Werke*, Augsburg, 1930 (hereinafter quoted as "Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930"), pp. 126-145 with docs. 101-110 on pp. 185-189 and reproductions on p. 137.

2. Cf. Bier, *loc.cit.*, and Felix Mader, *Die Kunstdenkmäler des Königreichs Bayern*, III, Heft XII, Stadt Würzburg, München, 1915, pp. 249ff.

3. Cf. *Deutsches Kunstblatt*, 1850, p. 309.

4. *ibid.*, 1853, p. 255.



originals, including *St. Andrew*, were restored and placed in the Cathedral on the piers next to the west entrance.<sup>5</sup> Only the statue of St. John the Baptist escaped this second restoration because it was considered too ruined for a successful restoration and was therefore transferred to the municipal art collection, which later became part of the Mainfränkische Museum.

How much the figure of St. Andrew was restored is evident from the fact that the pre-World War II catalogue of the Bavarian National Museum in Munich lists two fragments of it, now lost: "arms and hands which hold the cross with manifold mutilations" and "fragment of a tree trunk with branches cut off, probably from the cross in the arms of the figure of St. Andrew."<sup>6</sup> Apparently some minor restorations also took place, at least in the crown of curls which frames St. Andrew's face. This is suggested by their stereotyped appearance.

In spite of the fact that the execution was probably left largely to an assistant and in spite of the defects in its restoration, the imposing patriarchal figure is one of the most impressive and monumental inventions of Riemenschneider when seen in entirety from some distance, although the head is weak and without the subtlety of expression of heads carved by Riemenschneider himself. A dignified but empty face appears above a broad flowing beard, neatly trimmed to a swallowtail shape.

St. Andrew is standing nearly in profile toward the left, if the figure is viewed as was intended in its original location.<sup>7</sup> He holds the large X-shaped cross in his right arm, steadying it between his two hands. Both hands hold the upper forward arm of the cross, the lower left hand through the cloak, which has been drawn up and wrapped around the cross with one end covering its center. The singular simplicity in Riemenschneider's handling of the motif of the great cloak with its cascade of folds becomes especially evident if the figure is compared with a *St. Andrew* of the Master E.S. (L. 127), an engraving which may have offered the starting point for Riemenschneider's composition. In the clarity of design and the harmonious treatment of the great accord of folds in the drapery, together with the quiet dignity in the appearance of the saint, this figure testifies to the existence of a German Renaissance spirit before the impact of Italian motifs was felt in German art.

That the figure was executed by an assistant is highly plausible since we have documentary evidence that Riemenschneider employed as many as three sculptors in stone at one time<sup>8</sup> and since no special demand for personal execution seems to have been made in the case of the fourteen statues of this series, unlike the Adam and Eve for the same chapel paid for at a higher rate.<sup>9</sup> The loss because of workshop execution of Riemenschneider's design seems major only in the head. Its vacuous regularity of form and pettiness in the execution of hair and beard, which cannot be blamed entirely on the nineteenth century restorer, is all too apparent under closer scrutiny. At a distance, however, the very regularity of features and rather strong accents of shadow, as in the deep hollows under the brows, fit well with the general design.

5. They are described there by Anton Weber, *Leben und Werke des Bildhauers Dill Riemenschneider*, Würzburg and Vienna, 1884, p. 12. Carl Streit, *Tilmann Riemenschneider*, Berlin, 1888, p. 24, mentions that the transfer took place in "most recent times." A new transfer inside the Würzburg Cathedral to the altar in the south apse of the transept is now planned. Cf. Kurt Gerstenberg, *Tilmann Riemenschneider*, 3rd ed., Munich, 1950, p. 35. The transfer is to take place after completion of the reconstruction of the cathedral, which burned in World War II and whose vaults collapsed after the end of the war under the weight of the new roof.

6. Hugo Graf, *Gothische Alterthümer der Baukunst und Bildnerei* (Kataloge des Bayerischen Nationalmuseums, VI), Munich, 1896, p. 20, nos. 367 and 368. The first fragment was 39 x 30 cm, and 17 cm deep; the second fragment 23 cm long and 8 x 9 cm in diameter. These two fragments could

not be found after the destruction to the Museum brought by World War II. They had not been removed from the Museum building because they were not considered important enough to be transferred to a safe place.

7. Of our reproductions, Fig. 1 shows the statue slightly from the left, whereas Fig. 2 shows it, very slightly, from the right. Photographs which show the statue with the head in frontal view, like the ones reproduced here as Fig. 1 and by Hubert Schrade, *Tilmann Riemenschneider*, Heidelberg, 1927, as fig. 25 on pl. XVII, give a minor aspect rather than the main view intended for the statue.

8. Cf. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, p. 179, doc. 89 of December 12, 1508: "dan er itzt drey steynmetzen hab" (since he has now three masons).

9. Cf. Justus Bier, *Tilmann Riemenschneider, Die frühen Werke*, Würzburg, 1925 (hereinafter quoted as "Bier, *op.cit.*,"



The documents prove that the fourteen stone figures for Our Lady's Chapel were executed between 1499 and 1506,<sup>10</sup> and seem to indicate that three statues were completed by 1501.<sup>11</sup> These were probably *St. Andrew*, *St. John the Evangelist*, and *St. John the Baptist*, all three broadly designed in big, vigorous forms. Since other statues in the series, showing more involved design relate definitely to Riemenschneider's works of a later date, and since the three mentioned, particularly the *St. Andrew*, seem to continue the monumental simplicity of design found in the statue of Prince-Bishop Rudolf von Scherenberg on his monument in Würzburg Cathedral, completed in 1499,<sup>12</sup> the conclusion must be drawn that the *St. Andrew* is one of the earliest in the series, if not the earliest, and must be dated about 1500. In *St. Andrew*'s cloak the motif of folds, which hang down heavily and meet as they shift like clasping hands, repeats almost to the letter the motif of folds in the dalmatic of Rudolf von Scherenberg.<sup>13</sup>

## II

Riemenschneider represented *St. Andrew* in various pictorial compositions involving the twelve apostles, such as the *Last Supper* and the *Entry into Jerusalem* in the Rothenburg altarpiece of the Holy Blood<sup>14</sup> and the *Assumption* in the Creglingen altarpiece (Fig. 17), but a statuelike standing figure occurs in such compositions only in the altarpiece in the Kurpfälzische Museum in Heidelberg (Figs. 5-7).<sup>15</sup> The author<sup>16</sup> as well as Hubert Schrade,<sup>17</sup> deceived by the appearance of the altarpiece before the removal of the largely modern coat of paint, considered it the work of an assistant; Eduard Tönnies evaluated it as a work "certainly by Riemenschneider."<sup>18</sup> Tönnies' evaluation of the altarpiece as a work by the master was confirmed after the removal of the heavy coat of paint, although his dating, 1495, was too early. The date of 1509 was established when, during the recent restoration of the altarpiece, an inscription was discovered which proved that it came from Windsheim and which allowed it to be identified with the supposedly burnt Windsheim altarpiece of the Twelve Apostles completed in 1509.<sup>19</sup> It stood in the Church of *St. Kilian* in Windsheim at the eastern end of the southern aisle until this church was destroyed

1925"), pp. 99f., doc. 15. Riemenschneider received 60 guilders for each one of the two figures. In this case the price included bracket, canopy, stone, and installation.

10. Cf. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, pp. 128 and 186, no. 104. Payment for bringing in the stones from the quarry at Königshofen was made before May 8, 1499, so that Riemenschneider could have started work in that year.

11. According to the final account Riemenschneider must have received 30 guilders of the total of 140 guilders due to him during the years 1499-1500 and 1500-1501, for which the account books are lost. (Cf. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, p. 188, no. 107k.) From this fact we may assume that three figures were completed before the next payment of 20 guilders was made to him in 1502-1503.

12. Cf. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1925, pp. 78-86, with documents pp. 101-103, nos. 23-25, and pls. 53-61. Cf. particularly pl. 55 or in Justus Bier, *Tilman Riemenschneider Ein Gedenkbuch* (6th ed.), Vienna, 1948 (hereinafter quoted as "Bier, *op.cit.*, 1948"), pl. 22. The Scherenberg monument was completed and paid for on July 14, 1499.

13. Fritz Knapp, *Riemenschneider* (Künstler-Monographien, vol. 119), Bielefeld and Leipzig, 1935, p. 23, dates the stone figure of *St. Andrew* "about 1504" together with the figure of *St. Peter*. He assumes that Riemenschneider started "quite dull and tame" with the Savior figure which is so described very inappropriately, moving on to "freer" figures like those of *St. Bartholomew* and *St. Simon*, then increasing the materiality of forms ("Materialität der Formen") in the figures of *St. Thomas*, *St. Judas Thaddeus*, and *St. Philip* (which is labeled "St. Bartholomäus," p. 34) to the "baroque massiveness" of

the figures of *St. Peter* and *St. Andrew*. Why should Riemenschneider be "quite dull and tame" at the time he carved the *Last Supper*? And how can "baroque massiveness" be found in the figure of *St. Peter*, which in its complexity of design is the very opposite of the figure of *St. Andrew*? Obviously Knapp is hasty in his conclusions.

14. Cf. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, pls. 70 and 79f.; Bier, *op.cit.*, 1948, pls. 26ff. and 40. Cf. also *Art Quarterly*, IX, 1946, fig. 9, p. 139.

15. Lindenwood, paint removed. Height 91 cm (36 inches).

16. *Op.cit.*, 1930, pp. 3ff. and 134 with pl. 68.

17. *Op.cit.*, note 254.

18. *Leben und Werke des Würzburger Bildschnitzers Tilman Riemenschneider* (Studien zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte, XXII), Strasbourg, 1900, pp. 85ff. Cf. p. 87: "Eine sichere Arbeit Riemenschneiders."

19. This confirmed the author's dating of the work "about 1510" (cf. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, p. 196. For the documents cf. *ibid.*, nos. 48f. on pp. 166f.). For the recent restoration and its results cf. [Georg Poensgen and Klaus Mugdan] *Der Windsheimer Zwölfbotenaltar von Tilman Riemenschneider im Kurpfälzischen Museum zu Heidelberg* (pamphlet), Heidelberg, n.d.; Kurt Gerstenberg, *Tilman Riemenschneiders Windsheimer Zwölfboten-Altar im Kurpfälzischen Museum zu Heidelberg* (Mainfränkische Hefte, Heft 6), Würzburg, 1950; K. Gerstenberg, *Tilman Riemenschneider*, 3rd ed., Munich, 1950, pp. 144-160; *Der Windsheimer Zwölfbotenaltar von Tilman Riemenschneider im Kurpfälzischen Museum zu Heidelberg . . .*, herausgegeben von Georg Poensgen, Munich and Berlin, 1955, pp. 14-20 and *passim*.

in the fire of 1730. The altarpiece must have been saved out of the burning church since it shows several charred places.<sup>20</sup>

Whereas most of the figures of the Windsheim altarpiece are carved in pairs, *St. Andrew* is carved as a single figure. He stood originally and now stands again to the left of Christ, balancing *St. Peter* on the right in the total composition.

The Windsheim *St. Andrew* is shown without an outer cloak. He is clad in the long-sleeved sheathlike robe which is the usual garment of the apostles in Riemenschneider's representations. His is buttoned in front down to the waist. A scarf swinging from his right shoulder is wound around his left wrist, the end falling straight down to about the height of the knees. He has laid his right arm around the forward upper arm of his cross and holds the open prayer book in his left hand, propping it up against his breast while his eyes follow the lines. The upper arm of the cross is incomplete since it disappears behind the central figure of Christ.<sup>21</sup>

The Windsheim *St. Andrew* (Fig. 7) is in sharp contrast to the monumental stone figure in the Würzburg Cathedral (Figs. 1-2): the figure is slender and the lack of a cloak, accentuating the slenderness, gives it a much more Gothic look. It may seem strange that Riemenschneider's way led from the almost Renaissance-like monumentality of that earlier figure to the slender Gothicism of the Windsheim *St. Andrew*. Yet many observations make clear that Riemenschneider tried to speak a more vigorous, more realistic language in the period of the monument of Prince-Bishop Scherenberg and the *Last Supper* in the Holy Blood altarpiece in Rothenburg than in the following years. Nowhere does he seem so close to Dürer and the school of Nuremberg in the virile types of heads and in the vigor of his drapery motifs. He must have realized in the following years that this kind of monumentality was not his forte. A largely mediaeval attitude then takes hold of his work. Scant attention is paid to the new, realistic achievements of spatial composition, emphasis on the law of gravity in the solid build of figures, and realistic, down-to-earth grasp of human physiognomies. Spiritual expression subjugates all other elements.

The *St. Andrew* in the Windsheim altarpiece (Fig. 7) is almost as much an extreme among Riemenschneider's usual forms of expression as is the stone figure in the Cathedral (Figs. 1-2). Whereas the stone figure stands broad and secure in itself, the wood figure from the Windsheim altarpiece seems in its bent curve to seek support from the cross. The very tension of the figure in its bowl-like swing seems to become an expression of the spirit of prayer which enfolds this *St. Andrew*. The way in which the head (Fig. 5) bends toward the open book, held by one of the most graceful hands in the whole work of Riemenschneider (Fig. 6), the way in which the eyes seem to follow the lines, and the lips to move, all suggests comparison with the *St. Paul* of the Creglingen *Assumption* (lower right in Fig. 19), who shares the book with *St. Peter* and is so absorbed in his prayer that he misses the miracle of the *Assumption*. The scarf wrapped around the wrist of the Windsheim *St. Andrew* (Figs. 6 and 7), with its almost too elegant movement from the shoulder down, is an unprecedented motif in Riemenschneider's work. It evidently was introduced here to break the monotony of a cloakless figure in a sheathlike dress of utter simplicity.

### III

The chapel of the Ehehaltenhaus, which contained the painted wooden statue of *St. Andrew* (Fig. 3)<sup>22</sup> before its mysterious disappearance, is the chapel of an old peoples' home, whose

20. Cf. Gerstenberg, *op.cit.*, Würzburg, 1950, p. 5; Poensgen (ed.), *op.cit.*, 1955, pp. 13, 20.

21. According to the present arrangement of the figures, which seems a correct reconstruction. The reproduction in Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, pl. 69, showed *St. Andrew* squeezed in the left corner of the center part which had been narrowed probably

after the rescue of the altarpiece from the fire. Cf. Gerstenberg, *op.cit.*, Würzburg, 1950, p. 7 and Poensgen (ed.), *op.cit.*, 1955, pp. 21-24 with figs. 13 and pl. 103.

22. Probably linden; height ca. 107 cm (42 inches). Streit, *op.cit.*, pl. 93. Streit's plates reproduce the sculptures in reverse; that this is true also for the statue of *St. Andrew* is proven by



3. *St. Andrew*

4. *St. Barbara*

3-4. *St. Andrew* (lost), by Tilmann Riemenschneider. Lindenwood. *St. Barbara* (ca. 1505) by the Workshop of Tilmann Riemenschneider. After removal of paint and (modern) crown. Würzburg, Mainfränkisches Museum. Both statues were from the Chapel of the Ehehaltenhaus

1-2. Tilmann Riemenschneider (Workshop), *St. Andrew* from Our Lady's Chapel, Würzburg. Sandstone. Würzburg, Cathedral



5-6. Details of Fig. 7



7. Tilmann Riemenschneider, *St. Andrew* (1509) from the Altarpiece of the Twelve Apostles, St. Kilian, Windsheim. Lindenwood Heidelberg, Kurpfälzisches Museum





8. Tilmann Riemenschneider, *St. Andrew* (ca. 1504/5). Lindenwood  
New York, Samuel H. Kress Foundation



9-10. Details of Fig. 8





11. Tilmann Riemenschneider, *St. James the Greater*. Lindenwood. Munich, Bavarian National Museum



12. Tilmann Riemenschneider (Workshop), *St. Judas Thaddeus* from Our Lady's Chapel. Sandstone. Würzburg, Mainfränkisches Museum



13. Tilmann Riemenschneider, *Bishop Saint*. Lindenwood, painted. Munich, Julius Bohler Collection



14. Tilmann Riemenschneider and assistant, *St. Nicholas*. Lindenwood. Würzburg, Mainfränkisches Museum



15. Tilmann Riemenschneider, *St. Andrew* from Our Lady's Chapel, Würzburg. Lindenwood. Munich, Bavarian National Museum



16. Detail of Fig. 17



17. Tilman Riemenschneider, Altarpiece of the Assumption  
Lindenwood. Creglingen, Church of Our Lord



18. *Jesus in the Temple*, predella  
relief, detail of Fig. 17



19-20. Details of Fig. 17



endowment has been used to take care of old domestic servants ("Eehalten") since the early seventeenth century. The statue of St. Andrew "crumbled to pieces," according to the caretaker of the Eehaltenhaus, who in this improbable way explained its disappearance to the late G. H. Lockner.<sup>23</sup> According to Lockner the caretaker's tale probably had to cover up the theft of the statue from this municipal institution. If this assumption is right, there is at least hope that the statue may be found again.

Adelmann praises this *St. Andrew* (Fig. 3)—and we believe rightly—as a "sublime creation" by Riemenschneider, equal in quality to the *St. James the Great* in the Bavarian National Museum in Munich (Fig. 11), which always has been considered as one of his finest works.<sup>24</sup>

The *St. Andrew* from the Eehaltenhaus (Fig. 3) stands less erect than the stone *St. Andrew* in the Würzburg Cathedral (Figs. 1-2) and the Windsheim *St. Andrew* (Fig. 7). His body is articulated in a Gothic S-curve, produced by his leaning against the cross: his right arm rests in the upper fork of the cross. St. Andrew is cast here in a contemplative mood although his face expresses a certain tenseness as though he were concentrated in sharp thought. He carries the book closed in the cupped fingers of his left hand. His right hand is extended in front of it in a graceful gesture of protection. His dress is again the straight sheath, buttoned in front and held together with a belt. The cloak he wears over it is drawn up under his left hand, and folded over three times. After coming around the figure, it covers his right shoulder. One end swings over the lower forward arm of the cross. The whole arrangement is a complicated one, not unlike the arrangement found in the figure of St. Peter in the Marienkapelle series of apostles,<sup>25</sup> which we consider as one of the later figures of this set, about 1505, a date which should prove acceptable also for the lost statue of the Eehaltenhaus Chapel.

#### IV

The unpainted wooden statue of St. Andrew that we introduce here as a previously unknown work by Riemenschneider's hand (Figs. 8-10)<sup>26</sup> seems—far more than the others—inspired by the description of St. Andrew in "The Lives of the Saints." St. Andrew is described there as the "worthy apostle" who "loved God and served Him with diligence by day and night, with praying, with fasting, with staying awake, and with much other good exercise," to translate from Koberger's edition of 1488, which was the one most probably familiar to Riemenschneider.<sup>27</sup>

the reverse appearance of a still extant *St. Barbara* on the same plate. This statue of St. Barbara (Fig. 4) of lindenwood, from which the paint has been removed, 110 cm (43 inches) high, stood formerly opposite the statue of St. Andrew under the triumphal arch of the chapel of the Eehaltenhaus. It is now in the Mainfränkische Museum, Würzburg. Artistically not equal to the statue of St. Andrew, it is a workshop replica of the *St. Barbara* of Riemenschneider in the Bavarian National Museum at Munich. Streit's technical error of printing the photograph in reverse has been corrected in our reproduction by giving the mirror image of the St. Andrew as illustrated in Streit. We are indebted to Mr. Walter Hauser, curator of the library of the Metropolitan Museum of Art for the photograph used here.

23. As reported in 1924 by G. H. Lockner to the author. Cf. also Carl Adelmann, "Til Riemenschneider," *Walhalla*, VI, Leipzig, 1910, p. 91.

24. Cf. Weber, *op.cit.*, 1884, p. 18; 2d ed., 1888, p. 28; 3rd ed., 1911, p. 207; Wilhelm Bode, *Geschichte der deutschen Plastik* (Geschichte der deutschen Kunst, II), Berlin, 1887, p. 172; Streit, *op.cit.*, p. 18; Wilhelm Lübke in: *Beilage zur allgemeinen Zeitung*, 1889, Nr. 73 (reprinted in W. Lübke, *Altes und Neues*, 1891, p. 243); Graf, *op.cit.*, p. 44, no. 701; Tönnies, *op.cit.*, p. 255, 2a; Schrade, *op.cit.*, pp. 105f. and n. 232; Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, p. 139 (with reproduction); Theodor Demmler, *Die Meisterwerke Tilman Riemenschneiders*,

Berlin, 1936, p. 72 (with reproduction on p. 73).

25. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, pp. 132f.

26. Linden, unpainted, now stained brown. Height 41 inches, width (at base) 11½ inches, depth 8 inches. Restored: the bridge of the nose, parts of the top section of the book (its two upper corners, a small strip at the upper edge of the left side of the cover taking in the first pages, and an irregularly shaped small section at the top of the book's back), the branch farther from us of the upper fork of the cross and small sections at the base. The wormholes are partially filled with wood putty. The original location of the statue is unknown. It was in the 1930's in the author's collection at Widdersberg, acquired from a dealer in the Rhineland. Sequestered by Nazi authorities and auctioned in Hamburg, it was acquired at the beginning of World War II by the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg, but restored to the rightful owner after World War II. It is now in the collection of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York.

27. "Andreas der wirdig zwelffpot het got lieb vn[d] dienet im mit vleys tag vnd nacht, mit beten, mit vasten, mit wachen, un[d] mit vil ander guter vbung." Jacobus de Voragine, *Heiligenleben*, Nuremberg (Anton Koberger), 1488, fol. CCLX v., "Von sant Endres dem heyiligen zwelffpoten." The passage quoted, not contained in Caxton's English translation, is an addition of the German translator who prepared the text used by Koberger.



Here St. Andrew stands before us, erect, but slightly bent forward, deeply engrossed in his reading, with an even more determined and more intense expression of concentration on prayer than the figure in the Windsheim altarpiece (Figs. 5-7). The cross has now changed to the saint's left side, kept slightly behind the saint's bare left foot which is set forward, as in the Windsheim figure.<sup>28</sup> The cloak is drawn up in a far less complicated arrangement than seen on the figure of the Ehehaltenhaus (Fig. 3). Clasped together over the breast and tightly drawn over the narrow shoulders, it is gathered up in voluminous folds on the saint's right side, held by the arm which supports the book, whereas on the saint's left side the end of the cloak is slung over the center part of the cross, in a movement which seems to echo the central motif of the cloak, the hanging end of the gathered-up part. The very naturalness of the arrangement indicates that Riemenschneider did not wish to emphasize the play of the cloak and thus detract from the grave mood in which he had conceived the whole figure.

Even in the hand which holds the book (Fig. 10) the same strict earnestness can be observed. This hand does not engage in the elegant play so obvious in the hands of the Windsheim and Ehehaltenhaus figures (Figs. 6, 3) with their small fingers spread out capriciously. Hands which express an equally deep emotion are found in the Creglingen *Assumption* (Figs. 17ff.) where St. Philip's right hand (upper right in Fig. 19) offers a close comparison.<sup>29</sup> It should be observed also that St. Andrew's left hand which holds the cross (Fig. 8) has its equivalent in its looser grip among the hands of the apostles of the Creglingen *Assumption*: the more relaxed opening-up of the fingers occurs there, for instance, in the left hand of *St. James the Greater* (lower right in Fig. 20) and in the right hand of the apostle behind him, who crosses his arms over his breast.<sup>30</sup>

In relation to the three other statues this one (Fig. 8) seems closest in its straightforward severity to the stone *St. Andrew* (Figs. 1-2). Yet whereas the face had proved so disappointing in the stone figure,<sup>31</sup> here (Fig. 9) its complete expressiveness is in perfect accord with the abstract language of drapery and folds.

But although the mood of the two figures is similar, their style is not. The *St. Andrew* introduced here (Fig. 8) does not belong to the earlier phase of Riemenschneider's art which fits the stone *St. Andrew* (Figs. 1-2), probably of about 1500. It illustrates a new stylistic concept developed by Riemenschneider during the work on the altarpiece of the Holy Blood for St. James' in Rothenburg-on-the-Tauber.<sup>32</sup> This concept manifests itself first in the figure of Mary in the *Annunciation* on top of the central part of this altarpiece, executed between 1502 and 1504,<sup>33</sup> and in the relief of Christ at Gethsemane of the same years.<sup>34</sup> The new style experienced here works less with tactile and linear means and more with the action of light and shade as primary agents.

Among the series of stone apostles, the *St. James the Greater*, *Thomas*, *Peter*, and *Paul*,<sup>35</sup> all with rich and complex figurations, dense rhythm of folds and strong facial expressions, seem close in spirit to the wooden *St. Andrew* (Fig. 8). Those statues were evidently carved toward the end of the period during which the stone apostles filled Riemenschneider's workshop, probably between 1504 and 1506. Yet the statue considered here did not serve as the model for

28. The figures from the Marienkapelle (Figs. 1-2) and from the Ehehaltenhaus (Fig. 3) show the right foot set forward, which in the case of the stone figure (Figs. 1-2) appears between the lower ends of the cross, an awkward motif which Riemenschneider rightly abandoned in the later representations of St. Andrew (cf. Figs. 7 and 8).

29. For details, cf. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, pl. 92, *op.cit.*, 1948, pl. 68.

30. For details, cf. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, pl. 93, *op.cit.*, 1948, pl. 66.

31. Cf. Tönnies, *op.cit.*, p. 284, who remarks how especially evident the empty technical treatment of this figure is.

32. Cf. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, pp. 11-43, pls. 70-85.

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 41ff., pl. 84. Detail in Bier, *op.cit.*, 1948, pl. 37.

34. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, pp. 12, 25f., 38, pl. 81; Bier, *op.cit.*, 1948, pl. 41.

35. Cf. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, pp. 126-144 with reproductions, pp. 129, 132f., 142, pl. 133.

any of these figures, as did such wooden figures as *St. Matthias* in the Berlin Museum<sup>36</sup> and the *St. James the Greater* in the Bavarian National Museum (Fig. 11).<sup>37</sup>

There is, however, one figure in the stone series, *St. Judas Thaddeus* (Fig. 12),<sup>38</sup> which makes use of the central motif in the arrangement of the cloak of the wooden *St. Andrew* here under discussion (Fig. 8). The twice folded-over end of the cloak, hanging down from where the gathered-up part is held to the body by the pressure of St. Andrew's hand with the book or St. Judas Thaddeus' right forearm, appears in both draperies with the same characteristic folds and the S-shaped over-turn at the lower seam.<sup>39</sup> The greater richness and livelier treatment of the wooden figure seems to assure that the motif was developed there first and copied by the assistant entrusted with carving the stone figure of St. Judas Thaddeus. Yet since this assistant was probably guided by a drawing from Riemenschneider's hand, Riemenschneider could have incorporated this motif in this drawing before he decided to make use of it in a statue that he executed himself.

The stone *Judas Thaddeus* (Fig. 12), although as monumental in its design as the early stone *St. Andrew* (Figs. 1-2), differs from the period around 1500 in its less tactile approach. Its stronger values of light and shade indicate that it belongs to a later period.<sup>40</sup> If executed in the last years in which work on the series of the apostles was done, the lindenwood *St. Andrew* under discussion here (Fig. 8) may have been already in progress or even finished to guide the assistant in this particular motif, in addition to Riemenschneider's working drawing which also must have shown it.

The *St. Andrew* must also be close in time to the Creglingen altarpiece (Figs. 16ff.). This altarpiece must have been carved between 1505 and 1510, after the altarpiece of the Holy Blood (1501-1505) and the series of the stone apostles (1499-1506), and before the sculptures from the altarpiece of the Würzburg Cathedral (1508-1510) and the Heidingsfeld *Mount of Olives* (1510).<sup>41</sup> The *St. Andrew* and the altarpiece are alike in the integration of all elements into a fluid and unified composition as against the additive approach of the earlier works, in the way

36. The height of this figure is 104.5 cm, the same as the *St. Andrew* here discussed (its height, 41 inches, is 104.14 cm, leaving a difference of 3 to 4 mm only). Hence it would be tempting to draw the conclusion that both figures were carved for the same altarpiece. Yet equal height does not seem sufficient for such an assumption. The stone *St. Matthias*, for which the Berlin statue served as model, is reproduced in Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, p. 142.

37. Cf. above note 24. The stone *St. James the Less*, for which the Munich statue of St. James the Greater (Fig. 11) served as model for the total motif is reproduced in Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, p. 138. The stone *St. James the Greater*, which repeats the movements and the expression of the face of the Munich statue (Fig. 11), is reproduced in Bier, *op.cit.*, p. 129. The total motif of this figure is derived from the painted wooden figure of an unidentified bishop saint by Riemenschneider in the private collection of Julius Böhler in Munich (Fig. 13). The statue was formerly in the collection of the sculptor Kahle in Würzburg. The Böhler statue, 117.5 cm (46 inches) high is to be dated about 1505. It has been restored. New are the upper part and the lower end of the crozier, half of the left hand and the part of the sudarium below this hand, also small outer sections of the base. The downward direction of the blessing hand may indicate that the bishop represented St. Valentine blessing a (now lost) small figure of an epileptic lying or standing on the bishop's left.

38. Cf. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, pls. 134, 136; *op.cit.*, 1948, pls. 50, 52.

39. In a statue of St. Nicholas (Fig. 14) in the Mainfränkische Museum, Würzburg, carved in lindenwood, 124 cm high, the motif reappears with its characteristic features, although now shifted from the center of the figure more to the side. As the director of the Museum, Dr. Max H. von Freeden,

has pointed out in a letter to the author, the statue probably comes from a *leprosarium* dedicated to St. Nicholas, which was outside the Zeller Tor. (After the demolition of this building, according to Dr. von Freeden, the statue was transferred to a hospital, the Siechenhaus an der Dürrbacher Steige, which was in turn demolished to make way for a railroad, the statue now being transferred to the Ehehaltenhaus. From there it was turned over to the municipal collections in 1882. In 1945, during the bombing of Würzburg, a bomb blast, which demolished the museum building, threw the figure on top of a heap of debris. Someone with an eye for art treasures carried it off so that the museum officials thought it burned. However in 1951 the "finder" decided to return it to the museum.) The figure was probably carved by an assistant with some participation by Riemenschneider's own hand: its quality is finer than that of the usual products of the workshop. Two inferior copies of the figure are extant: in the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Brunswick, and in the Catholic Church at Gailbach (for the latter cf. *Kunstdenkmäler d. K. Bayern*, III, Heft XXIV, Bez. Amt Aschaffenburg, Munich, 1927, p. 12 with fig. 1 on p. 11).

40. In its lively and impetuous style the figure is almost unique among the stone apostles, indicating the hand of an assistant who could not suppress his own rather personal expression. This assistant has been identified by the author with the Riemenschneider pupil who carved the *Lament for Christ* from Hof Lilach, now in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Gallery at Villa Favorita, Lugano-Castagnola. Cf. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, pp. 143-145, pls. 134, 136-138; Bier, "Der Meister des Wettlinger Altars, Ein Schüler Riemenschneiders," *Das Münster*, VIII (1955), pp. 137-149 (with discussion of other works by this assistant related to the Hof Lilach group).

41. Cf. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1948, pp. 30-34, pls. 26-80.

in which light and shade are used to suggest volume and create a space for the figure, and in the subtle individuation of character. Yet beyond these more general conformities there is also a more specific one: the particular motif of drapery which the stone *St. Judas Thaddeus* (Fig. 12) and the *St. Andrew* (Fig. 8) have in common is repeated in the Creglingen altarpiece. It is found in the drapery of Mary in the scene of *Jesus among the Doctors* in the predella (Fig. 18), and developed more monumentally in the piece of cloak held by the graceful right hand of *St. James the Greater* in the central *Assumption* (Fig. 11).

To conclude: the figure of *St. Andrew* was probably carved about 1505, about the same time when work was, presumably, begun on the Creglingen altarpiece.

## V

Besides the single figures of Andrew, those appearing in scenes can be briefly discussed for the evidence of variation on the theme that they provide.

To the representations of *St. Andrew* identified by his symbol which we discussed above, there must be added one figure in the group of twelve seated apostles carved in lindenwood, which came from the Marienkapelle in Würzburg to the Bavarian National Museum (Fig. 15).<sup>42</sup> In facial type this fine figure is close to the figure from the Windsheim altarpiece from which it probably derives.

Yet when we turn to the two altarpieces which contain groups of the twelve apostles, problems arise. To identify the individual apostles in compositions which show them without their attributes is tempting although it may be doubted that even Riemenschneider himself, in developing a variety of types in such a group composition, could always have named each one. Tönnies believed that among the apostles in the *Last Supper* scene of the altarpiece of the Holy Blood, Andrew was the disputing figure at the very right of the front row.<sup>43</sup> This figure is indeed close in appearance to the *St. Andrew* of the altarpiece in the Heidelberg Museum (Fig. 3), which Tönnies considered the archetype of Riemenschneider's representations of the apostle series.<sup>44</sup> The author tentatively identified as *St. Andrew* the apostle at the extreme left in the front row who is resting his arm on the back rest of his bench and staring into space as he listens to the words of Christ.<sup>45</sup> With his broader beard and the large firm planes of his face, he impressed the author as being the closest equivalent to the stone *St. Andrew* (Figs. 1-2) although his hair is not arranged in a curly crown but in long wavy strands with a short curl above the forehead. Tönnies<sup>46</sup> described this figure as *St. Thomas*. It is somewhat similar in appearance to the wooden statue of *St. Andrew* here under observation (Fig. 9) except for the curl over the forehead. The same head reappears on the left wing of the altarpiece of the Holy Blood, which was carved by an assistant. It reappears here on the very left in the group of eleven apostles following Christ into Jerusalem above the head of *St. John the Evangelist* and below the head of *St. James the Greater*, who is wearing the hat of a pilgrim.<sup>47</sup>

Tönnies identified *St. Andrew* in the Creglingen *Assumption* (Fig. 17) as the apostle who shares the book with *St. Peter* (Fig. 19, lower right),<sup>48</sup> again on the basis of the similarity of this head to the *St. Andrew* of the altarpiece in the Heidelberg Museum (Fig. 5). We regarded

42. Cf. Graf, *Gothische Alterthümer*, etc., p. 44, nos. 693-700, with the older literature. Tönnies, *op.cit.*, pp. 160, 281-290 and pl. XIII; Adelman, *loc.cit.*, pp. 88-90; Schrade, *op.cit.*, p. 118 and n. 255; Demmler, *Die Meisterwerke Tilman Riemenschneiders*, pp. 84f. Schrade considers Christ and *St. Andrew* carved by one hand, but there is no figure of Christ in the Munich series. Cf. also Klaus Mugdan in Poensgen (ed.), *op.cit.*, 1955, pp. 73f. Mugdan rightly considers the Munich series as later than the Windsheim altarpiece, as executed after 1510 under Riemenschneider's direction by several

assistants. The Munich *St. Andrew* is of lindenwood, 54.5 cm (21½ inches) high.

43. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1948, pl. 31. Cf. also *Art Quarterly*, ix 1946, fig. 9, p. 139.

44. Tönnies, *op.cit.*, pp. 281f.

45. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1948, pl. 34.

46. Tönnies, *op.cit.*, p. 287.

47. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1948, pl. 40.

48. Tönnies, *op.cit.*, p. 284.



this figure as St. Paul on the basis of its similarity to the St. Paul of the stone series.<sup>49</sup> St. Andrew we did not name. However, the statue of St. Andrew here under discussion (Fig. 9) makes it probable that the fervently praying figure in the upper left-hand corner (Fig. 16) was meant to represent this apostle. This figure has its cloak drawn over the head in the manner of Jews wrapped in a prayer shawl and his hands are folded as only Mary's are in this scene. Tönnies<sup>50</sup> called him St. Thomas, like the apostle in the altarpiece of the Holy Blood whom we had proposed to represent St. Andrew. In spite of its more ardent expression the whole figure in spirit and physical form seems close to the St. Andrew statue owned by the Kress Foundation (Fig. 9), which shows so much more restraint but hardly less feeling.

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49. Cf. Bier, *op.cit.*, 1930, p. 80 n. 2, with reproductions on p. 81.

50. Tönnies, *op.cit.*, pp. 287f.



# THEATRUM MUNDI\*

RICHARD BERNHEIMER

## I

IT is difficult to find two elements in the Western tradition further apart in function and implication than the Christian idea of heaven and the Roman amphitheater—one a place of spiritual perfection, the other of mass passion and cruelty. It is also difficult to find two that are closer to each other in form. All that distinguishes the interior of amphitheaters—the vastness of their plan, their circularity, their regular layout, the horizontal rows of seats so superimposed as to suggest a hierarchy of rank—recurs in the image that Christianity formed of the habitations of the Blessed. When the circularity of the heavens is fully realized, as it is in Botticini's picture of Paradise (Fig. 1), the result is the likeness of an amphitheater, even though its inhabitants sit on thin strips of clouds rather than on marble seats.

It was inevitable that a resemblance as close as this should have been observed during the Renaissance and that attempts should have been made to draw its components into a near identity. But how was it to be done? Was one to represent the upper world in the image of its architectural simile? If so, one had to overlook the fact that the theater was a heavy material structure, whereas the heavens were transparent and ethereal. Or was one to start from existing theatrical buildings, investing their auditoria with celestial implications? One had then to be prepared to think of the human spectators in them, with all their frailties, as if they were angels incarnate. Unless the path was prepared by corresponding doctrines about the nature of theatrical audiences, this solution was not feasible. It is not astonishing then that the person who seems to have been the first during the Renaissance to use the theater as an image of heaven should have done so without suggesting either of the two proposed forms of identity. His theater was a symbolic tool, a means of cognition, and as such without living spectators, while it also made no claim of complete identity with the celestial world.

Its inventor, the writer Giulio Camillo, needs to be introduced to modern readers, for the prestige which made him one of the best known figures of his day has not lasted into recent times.<sup>1</sup> Contemporaries praised him as "more divine than human,"<sup>2</sup> and they were convinced that "his mind had risen to such height as cannot be attained by man's unaided strength."<sup>3</sup> They wondered, how "one author could ever have the fertility of mind required for the work,"<sup>4</sup> he had set out to do. While such praise cannot satisfy critical demands, it is true that he was a scholar of universal scope, whose erudition extended not only to the Christian and classical, but also to the Talmudic and cabalistic worlds. His mind, while tending to be abstruse, as so often is true when a person tries to harmonize divergent cultural trends, had amplitude and system and aimed at universal truth.

Yet even in his own day the chorus of Camillo's admirers was opposed by those who felt that he was a fraud and that his real accomplishment was out of proportion with his claims, an opinion

\* While preparing this study, I received valuable suggestions from the following persons: my brother, Professor Franz Bernheimer of Sweet Briar College, Professor Gertrude Bing and Professor Frances Yates of the Warburg Institute, and Professor Frederick Sternfeld of Dartmouth College and Miss Grahn of Yale Theater Library. Particular thanks are due to the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation for the generous grant that enabled me to accomplish this study.

1. The only extensive biographies of Camillo date from the eighteenth century: F. Altani, *Memorie intorno alla vita*

*ed all'opere di Giulio Camillo Delminio*, in *Nuova raccolta d'opuscoli scientifici e filosofici*, Venice, 1755, 1; and G. G. Liruti, *Notizie delle vite ed opere scritte da Letterati del Friuli*, Udine, 1780, III.

2. B. Parthenius, *Pro lingua latina*, Venice, 1545, ch. 4.

3. L. Domenichi, in his introduction to the first edition of Camillo's *Idea del teatro*, Florence, 1550.

4. G. Cousin in a letter written in 1558 quoted by Liruti, *op.cit.*, p. 123.



which has tainted his reputation ever since and contributed toward his present obscurity. His output of published work is in fact disappointingly small and insufficient to justify the high expectations contemporaries set in him. But his detractors were wrong, unwilling or unable as they were to make allowance for the unique complexion of his case. Camillo was a victim, not a charlatan—victim of an idea so grand and so demanding that it exceeded a lifetime's devotion and impeded secondary accomplishment. That idea was, as the reader will have guessed, that of a heavenly theater or, in more correct terms, of a theater of the world.

He began to be obsessed by this thought when still a young man in his native Udine or, at the latest, when, presumably in his early thirties, he held a position at the University of Bologna (1521-1525).<sup>5</sup> For the rest of his life his devotion to it never failed. As he traveled from court to court in Italy and in France, an honored guest yet always in need of justifying his work, he lectured on the nature of his scheme, reserving his greatest power of persuasion for sympathetic patrons such as Francis I of France or the Marchese del Vasto in Milan.<sup>6</sup> It is characteristic of him and of the fervent love with which he nurtured his scheme that with all his need to explain he seems to have never given out all that he knew. He promised and withheld, revealed and veiled, prepared, defined and exemplified, without ever coming to an end or deciding upon a complete release. When he died in 1544, the theater which had enthralled him throughout adult life was not complete.

His literary style confirms the impression of a man possessed, for it tends to be elliptical and obscure and presupposes much that is not said or that will be said on a later page, showing that he found it difficult to conceive of a person unacquainted with his scheme. His main book, the *Idea del teatro*, thus assumes on its title page that his readers know of what he is going to speak, for "the theater" is, of course, his own and he dwells with naïve insistence upon its prestige. It was Camillo's misfortune that this book, which alone gives an "idea" of his scheme, is an uneven sketch composed in great haste,<sup>7</sup> in order to please the Marchese del Vasto and to appease the clamor of other friends. It must today replace the revelation it was to prepare, for Camillo's masterpiece was lost or destroyed a short time after his death.<sup>8</sup>

But what did he mean when he spoke of a theater? One cannot presume without proof that a literary conceit such as this had a concrete existence in the material world, considering how often in the sixteenth century the term was employed to denote a mere scholarly scheme. Theaters of the world<sup>9</sup> and of every conceivable subject, from women's fashions<sup>10</sup> to calligraphy<sup>11</sup> to black magic,<sup>12</sup> abound in the literature of the time, and none of them is more than a title promising a complete treatment of its theme. It is therefore important to learn that Camillo's theater did in fact exist. Gilbert Cousin, writing in 1558, declared that he had seen it at the court of France and that it was a structure made of wood.<sup>13</sup> He explained that it was adorned with various images and arrayed and enriched in every part with a greater number of boxes and coffer: furthermore

5. It is evident, however, that while Camillo thought very early of producing a total picture of the universe, he did not originally intend to give to it the form of a theater, but to present it under the typical Renaissance image of the human body. See Camillo's letter to Flaminio, *Opere*, 1566 edition, p. 298, where the macrocosm is projected upon the anatomical parts.

6. He gave the Marchese (the husband of Vittoria Colonna) a series of seven morning talks, each lasting close to two hours, which were very much admired for comprehensiveness and clarity.

7. Camillo dictated the book in a week to his friend Girolamo Muzio, himself a prominent literary man (*Opere*, 1581 edition, p. 60).

8. There is a tradition that the literary property of Camillo's theater was stolen by one Alessandro Cittolini da Seravalle, who transformed it into a book of his own, his *Tipocosmia*,

Venice, 1561, and tried to use his plagiarism to gain the patronage of Queen Elizabeth of England (G. G. Liruti, *op.cit.*, p. 130).

9. Such as P. Galucci, *Theatrum Mundi et Temporis, in quo non solum praecipue horum partes describuntur, et ratio metiendi eas traditur, sed accomodatissimis figuris sub oculis legentium facile ponuntur*, Venice, 1588.

10. Jost Amman: *Gynaeceum sive theatrum mulierum*, Frankfurt, 1586.

11. Jodocus Hondius, *Theatrum artis scribendi, varia sumorum nostri saeculi artificum exemplaria complectus novem diversis linguis exarata*, Amsterdam, 1594.

12. Abraham Saur, *Theatrum de veneficiis, das ist: Von Teufelsgespenst, Zauberern und Giftbereitern, Schwarzkuenstern, Hexen und Unholden vieler fuernemmen Historien und Exempel*, Frankfurt, 1586.

13. See note 4.

that papers containing explanatory texts were to hang from its walls.<sup>14</sup> The theater was thus on an architectural scale, for it would have been impossible to reach the places where the coffers lay, had the entries and passages been of less than human size. The impatience and frustration of those who had heard of Camillo's theater from afar is thus partly explained, for unlike other literary works this one was localized and immobile like a product of the visual arts. To assure himself of its full reality an Italian had to undertake a trip to France and thus could be tempted to disparage what he had never seen.

Camillo's book gives us further details. There were seven levels accessible through seven sets of doors, a double number whose mystical import he justified by referring it to the seven times seven words in the Lord's prayer. Characteristically he omitted to mention the overall shape, which is likely to have been semicircular like that of the theater in Alberti's *De architectura*, which was also supplied with seven entrances.<sup>15</sup> Within this framework the structure of the world was to be displayed, as it appeared to most thinkers in Camillo's time, orderly, rational and stratified, so that every round bench in the material building became a simile for a level in the Divine plan. Camillo explains that he put the first causes closest to the arena and the derivations from them higher and higher up, duplicating the seating order of the Romans, "who placed the most honored persons in seats closest to the spectacle and those of lesser dignity on more distant ascending steps."<sup>16</sup> Following this arrangement the seven archetypes of creation, which Camillo called Saphiroth according to the nomenclature in the Cabala, came to be placed in the arena itself, in the form of columns like those in Salomon's temple. There followed in mounting order the seven planets, the simple elements of matter, the elements in a state of mixture, man's inner being, the juncture in him of body and soul, the varieties of his work and finally the arts, which were last in the order of precedent and therefore occupied the topmost bench: seven levels in all. It could fairly be claimed that this display represented the structure of the world and that nothing had been left out.

In order to put this scheme in visual form, the primary concepts were set forth as images painted over the entrance doors, beneath which there were other painted images rendering subordinate concepts, so that every metaphysical group also formed an architectural whole. The benches, for the sake of which other amphitheatres exist, were left empty except presumably for the coffers, which Cousin saw, and for the papers hanging from the walls. The method of presentation was thus an allegorical one. Camillo availed himself of the symbolism of classical mythology, using as a basis for his choice farfetched comparisons of remarkable arbitrariness. While the architecture of his amphitheater, as of all others, possessed the greatest uniformity, its visual content was thus made very diverse, as if it were intended to offset the regularity of the whole by the marked variation of its parts.

The divinities of the planets, which determine the operation of things beneath, were followed in the second row by what Camillo called "banquets" (*convivii*) symbolizing the simple elements because in Homer Oceanus had given a banquet to the other gods and had thus pointed to the "water of wisdom, which preceded prime matter and the first production"; the gods themselves were to be read as "ideas in the divine exemplar." On the next level there were caves, again in reminiscence of Homer, recalling the grotto on the coast of Ithaca, where nymphs had woven fabrics and wild bees stored their honey. Camillo interpreted this scene as a simile of things derived from a mixture of elements, somewhat as Porphyrius had done in his *Cave of the Nymphs*.<sup>17</sup>

14. Letter by G. Cousin in G. G. Liruti, *op.cit.*, p. 122: "Ea autem omnia in chartis quibusdam annotasse quae involvi et explicari possint, quaeque ad amphitheatri parietes suspensae confestim id quod quaeritur suppeditare valeant."

15. This point was suggested to me by Professor Frances Yates of the Warburg Institute in London.

16. Giulio Camillo, *Opere*, 1567 edition, p. 67: "Gli antichi erano talmente ordinati che sopra i gradi allo spettacolo più vicini sedevano i più honorati, poi di mano in mano sedevano ne' gradi ascendenti quelli che erano di minor dignità."

17. Ed. Taylor, p. 171.

Upward one step one encountered over every door three Gorgons, who symbolized man's inner world because the three of them shared only one eye, just as the three souls of man, distinguished according to the Zoar, had to rely on only one Divine ray. There followed Pasiphae, who was enamored of a bull and therefore was a fitting metaphor for the juncture of man's body with his soul; the mantle of Mercury, who, like all human work, gave realization to the will of the gods; and finally Prometheus as a patron of the arts. As a collection of symbols this scheme was remarkably abstruse, and was devised, as Camillo himself asserts, in order to prevent the desecration of esoteric truth by the uninitiated.<sup>18</sup>

Only at one place was the sequence of images broken by a foreign element: instead of the likeness of Apollo in the series of the planetary divinities, there arose in the basic tier a pyramid symbolizing "the breadth of all things," the highest point of which signified God himself, "unrelated and in universal relation." This structure occupied the center of the theater, and its location there demonstrates how closely, in spite of all surface paganism, Camillo's scheme reflected the Christian image of heaven, whose saints were always symmetrically and concentrically arrayed around the pivotal figure of God.

A dynastic interpretation of the theater supplemented the philosophic and theological one, making of it a "royal theater," as Flaminio called it in his description of Camillo's work.<sup>19</sup> Francis I, for whom it was built, was mirrored in it as a god on earth, and Camillo did not hesitate to resort to extreme terms of flattery in dedicating it to him. He writes with the wordiness of one who knowingly overstates his case, "You move the unchanging function of the world by law, you also rule over the painted places in the theater, for if something is below and above, it is everywhere, and we see that creative nature defines whatever is in your surrounding embrace."<sup>20</sup> By implication Francis thus takes the position of Apollo or of God like his later successor the *roi soleil*. We note the existence of a trend of thought which links the political with the metaphysical, creating a fusion that was to be of momentous consequence once the theater as a symbol of heaven and of the ruler passed from its speculative into its practical phase and real performances were attempted.

We have not touched as yet upon the purpose of the theater which gained Camillo almost lifelong support by a king and the admiration of his fellow literary men. Considering the acclaim it received, it could not have been a mere phantasy, a literary phantom, as one might have suspected, in view of the self-contained, introverted turn of Camillo's mind. It was to have a useful function, but one so remote from the experience of modern man that we cannot present it here without supplying a few explanatory notes. Camillo's theater was a mnemotechnic tool, meant to provide speakers with well-ordered material for their thought.

Writers during the Renaissance knew that there existed a so-called "memorative art," founded by the great orators of antiquity, the function of which was to supplement man's natural power of recall by a discipline extending its scope. Cicero<sup>21</sup> and Quintilian<sup>22</sup> had laid down the rules:<sup>23</sup> to prepare a speech a man was to order its contents in advance, symbolizing each paragraph by a properly chosen mental image, for, as Cicero explains, "in our minds those things are firmly

18. *Idea del teatro*, Florence, 1550, p. 58.

19. "Regium illud theatrum," M. A. Flaminio, *De imitatione*, Lib. 2, p. 431, quoted from Liruti, *op.cit.*, p. 125.

20. *Julii Camilli Delminii pro suo de eloquentia theatro ad Gallos oratio*, Venice, 1581, introduction:

"Vos certa mundi versatis munia lege,  
Vos certa nostra regitis loca picta theatri,  
Nam si quid sub supraque; est circumque; videmus  
Quidquid in amplexu est vestro, natura creatrix  
praeфинit."

The most extreme terms of flattery for Francis I are to be found in *Orationi di Giulio Camillo al Re Christianissimo*,

Venice, 1545, p. 1, where the king is addressed as divine and the statement is made that his rays like those of the sun enlighten lesser men.

21. *De oratore* ii. 86.

22. *Institutio oratorica* xi. 2, 18; also the pseudo-Ciceronian *Ad Herrenium*, 16-24, ed. F. Marx, Leipzig, 1894.

23. L. Volkmann, "Ars memorativa," *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen*, N. F., III, 1929, p. 111; H. Haydn, *Das mnemotechnische Schrifttum des Mittelalters*, Vienna, 1936; F. Yates, "The Ciceronian Art of Memory," in *Medioevo e Rinascimento, Studi in onore di Bruno Nardi*, Florence, 1955.



retained which were brought to them by the senses." Images could be selected among likenesses of the things to be remembered or to be related to them allegorically or in some other indirect way. Then an astonishing process began: the orator walked slowly through a familiar building nearby and placed the images, subjective as they were, upon its salient parts. If he chose his own house, he passed, as Quintilian explains, through the forecourt into the anteroom, from there into the inner court and into the various halls; or if he so preferred, he could concentrate instead on the exterior of public buildings, the walls of cities, or even imaginary structures. Each image had its "seat" on a column, in a corner or on an arch, where it would remain in store until it was recalled.<sup>24</sup>

Thus a speech was prepared. Its delivery consisted of a second, this time fictitious, walk through the same architectural environment, during which "one asked from every chosen place that which had been entrusted to it" and thus recalled in proper sequence what one had intended to say. This amazing method, of which few people know, shows perhaps more than anything else how different was the basic attitude of the European past from that which we possess today and how great has been our loss, owing to the extreme exploitation of the printing press, of imagination and ability to concentrate. Very few people living today could duplicate the processes which were apparently part of the normal training of an ancient orator, for the very power through which man projects his images into the outer world is found today only among the very young and among the highly gifted, who retain the spontaneity of youth.<sup>25</sup> Processes like those which Quintilian and Cicero describe we associate much more with Yoga and certain mystical experiences, and indeed the latter may very well have been encouraged and strengthened by the memory training which many persons received.

In Camillo's time the Ciceronian art of memory looked back upon a long and fruitful career, during which the achievements of the classical past had been preserved and adapted to the changed architectural environment of the mediaeval world.<sup>26</sup> There had recently been opposition to it, and it had even been proposed that the ancient ways should be abandoned for the more direct method of learning by rote.<sup>27</sup> It was Camillo's self-appointed task to preserve and extend the ancient art by constructing a device through which "everybody," in the words of Gilbert Cousin, "once admitted to see, could attain in a few days the power of speaking or writing on any subject as fluently as Cicero himself."<sup>28</sup> A system of "places and images" had been arranged, "sufficient for the location and management of all human concepts and of all things in this world, not only those which belong to the various fields of knowledge, but also to the noble arts and the mechanical."<sup>29</sup>

Camillo's ambition was thus very great, surpassing by far the intentions of the ancient orators: while the art of memory, as conceived in antiquity, had been a flexible instrument, designed to facilitate the delivery of any speech through aids wisely chosen by the orator himself, Camillo's "art" was prearranged, universal, and inflexible; it replaced the rambles through various rooms or colonnades by the contemplation, necessary for all, of one structure, that would always suffice; and it was its claim that it contained ready-made the material for whatever anybody could ever

24. Quintilian, *loc.cit.*

25. The psychological phenomenon in question, known as the eidetic faculty, has been explored chiefly by E. Jaensch in his books *Über den Aufbau des Bewusstseins*, Leipzig, 1930, and *Die Eidetik und die typologische Forschungsmethode*, Leipzig, 1937, as well as in numerous shorter publications.

26. The change in the architecture recommended for memory exercises is codified, among others, by J. Romberch, *Omnium de memoria praeceptiones aggregatim complectens*, Venice, 1533. On p. 18v he mentions among possible loci "Templa, monasteria, abbatias," and further "Parietes siquidem et finestras columnas altaria."

27. For the immediately following see F. Yates, *op.cit.*

28. Letter by G. Cousin, quoted from G. G. Liruti, *op.cit.*, p. 122: "Quidam a me perscribere Julium Camillum amphitheatrum quoddam, admirabilis ingenii opus, construxisse, in quod qui admittatur spectatum paucis diebus assequi queat ut de qualibet re non minus diserte quam ipse Cicero dicat vel scribat."

29. Giulio Camillo, "Trattato dell'imitatione," *Opere*, Venice, 1581: "Per lochi ed imagini disposti tutti quei lochi che possono bastare a tener collocati ed ministrar tutti gli umani concetti e tutte le cose che sono in tutto il mondo, non pure quelle che si appartengono alle scienze tutte, ed all'arti nobili e mechaniche."

want to say.<sup>30</sup> It is perhaps characteristic for a thinker of the Renaissance that a purpose such as this would appeal to him, that he would want to combine the *Summa* of mediaeval times with a device facilitating delivery, aiming, as a humanist would, both at elegance and comprehensiveness.

The psychological effect of contemplating Camillo's theater was also to be greater than that envisaged by the ancient orators, who had merely wanted to create "an artificial memory." Camillo, on the other hand, seems to have been convinced that he could reconstruct man himself by "skillfully fashioning a certain mentality and providing it with windows,"<sup>31</sup> that is by giving it order and scope. It is in fact quite possible to believe that by viewing the images the theater contained and letting their order impress itself upon his mind a man might have his frame of reference altered from small and self-centered ways of thought to an awareness of the whole, of its beauty and regularity; for images are the proper agents of spiritual change. Camillo may very well have thought, in accordance with his Neoplatonic creed, that the visible presence in his scheme of all the creative entities in the world would have a magical effect upon man's mentality.<sup>32</sup>

It must finally be stressed that Camillo's scheme, unlike those of the ancient orators, was more than a method only, since it was directed toward the presentation of universal truth, and that therefore it must take its place not only in the history of the mnemotechnic arts, but also of philosophy and cosmology. It is likely that its influence in these fields of thought was far greater than we know today and that the schemes into which ideas were pressed during the later Renaissance, were often elaborations of his.<sup>33</sup> The very frequency of the term theater among the titles of scientific books during the later sixteenth, the seventeenth, and even the eighteenth century may be regarded in part as a tribute to him and to the precedent he set of giving substance to a mnemotechnic device.<sup>34</sup> But Camillo's theater was philosophy in a particular sense since it was not meant to be discussed and to be laid open to the hazards of the market place, but to be learned by heart and imposed upon unprotesting minds. Much more than any system of speculative thought it resembles the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius of Loyola, Camillo's contemporary and fellow resident in France (1528-1535), whose purpose it was to redirect man's will through a series of images evoked and controlled within a predetermined scheme.<sup>35</sup> Like Ignatius' method for re-making personality, it might have had strange and unusual historical effects had all of it seen the light of day.

To the universality of his scheme Camillo sacrificed one of the principles of the mnemotechnic art, which postulated that "places" should not be of similar shape and that circularity should be eschewed, since it impaired distinctiveness.<sup>36</sup> Needing a theater for his cosmological scheme he decided to break the rule. He compensated for this disregard of precedent by rendering his images very diverse, remembering that Cicero had said that they should be "vivid, strong, and discrete." Thus when a person stood in the arena of his theater, the impressions that assailed his mind were sufficiently

30. In a sense Camillo had a forerunner in antiquity: a certain Metrodorus mentioned by Pliny *Hist. nat.* vii. 34, who used the signs of the zodiac as his *loci*. He was in high esteem during the Renaissance and known to Camillo.

31. G. Cousin, in a letter of 1558 quoted by Liruti, *op.cit.*, p. 123.

32. See E. H. Gombrich, "Icones Symbolicae," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, xi, 1948, p. 163.

33. This aspect of the subject will be elaborated in Professor Yates' book on the history of the mnemotechnic art.

34. It is striking that the vast majority of books having the word *theatrum* in their title came out after Camillo's death, beginning in the second half of the sixteenth century. There are, however, occasional earlier examples, best known among which is the *Theatrum sanitatis*, Codex 4182 of the Biblioteca Casanatense in Rome (early fifteenth century), brought out in 1940 in a facsimile edition by L. Serra and S. Baglioni. Since among the meanings of the word *theatrum* in the Middle

Ages were those of a place of assembly or of a market place, where merchandise was laid out, this early use of the word in a book title is not surprising (see Ducange's Dictionary s.v. "Theatrum"): a "theater" was a complete exhibit of a certain kind of specimens.

35. I regard it as possible and even likely that Ignatius was acquainted with Camillo's scheme and that it had a decisive influence upon his *Exercises*. It is striking, and can hardly be explained otherwise, that Ignatius, unlike the mystics of the mediaeval past, demands that images be deliberately evoked and manipulated, a method which is surely very close to that of the mnemotechnic art.

36. J. Romberch, *op.cit.*, says on p. 28v that among the "*loci*" to be avoided is "aut figura vel forma similis et spherica" and on p. 30r "quoniam aut circularitas et rotunditas non satis discretiva est." On the other hand he mentions on p. 18v theaters among the many types of buildings to be used for mnemotechnic purposes.

varied to be easily retained. They became even more distinct as the spectator mounted the stairs and contemplated the images, posters, and boxes of manuscript that crowded around the individual doors, each a little world of its own. Thus Camillo's scheme became more and more scholarly and literary,<sup>37</sup> as one descended from the general to the particular, while it relied on imagery in the measure in which the degree of abstraction increased. It balanced the natural tendency of the human mind toward thinning out in the areas of higher generality by rendering the most universal most concrete.

## II

So much about Camillo and his mnemotechnic device. As we pass from his sphere of interest to the history of art and of the theater, we will have to remember that his scheme and its European fame blazed the trail for later developments and that his influence, direct or indirect, is likely to have been at work whenever later men designed or constructed theaters of the world.

A few words will suffice to deal with attempts to depict the heavens as an amphitheater, for the tradition of its ethereal quality was too strong to encourage artists to render it in architectural terms. Even when an exception occurred, as it did when Herman tom Ring placed the blessed on concentric seats of stone (Fig. 3), the artist was not at ease with his unconventional design. In the painting for which tom Ring's drawing was a preparation,<sup>38</sup> the amphitheater dissolved again into clouds, showing that the painter regretted his momentary departure from the norm. In literature a similar situation prevailed, rendering approximations toward the theater of the heavens far more frequent than its outright designation by that term. It is hardly by chance that one of the few examples is found in the work of a literary buffoon, who did not expect to be taken seriously and thus could afford to break theological precedent.

When Antonio Francesco Doni prepared his fictitious descent into hell,<sup>39</sup> where he was to conclude a literary friendship with the devil, he had, so he says, a warning dream: he found himself in an "admirably constructed and beautifully adorned theater" lighted through a round window at the top, a composite, as it were, of two Roman round buildings, the Colosseum and the Pantheon. Men of grave countenance occupied its seats. They let their glance rest on him, inquired why he intended to break into the lower world, and cautioned him against the attempt, advice which he had to disregard since it would have spoiled his literary plans. Doni himself gives the "hidden meaning" of this scene by explaining that the theater is "this world" and his interlocutors are the doctors of the church, upon whom the window above pours out its supernatural light. His little invention is thus closer to the Christian tradition of the heavens than are Camillo's metaphysical complexities. He may not have come upon it independently, however, for we know that he was acquainted with Camillo's scheme, upon which he commented in his usual saucy and irreverent way.<sup>40</sup>

It will be noticed that the last two examples—one the work of a wag, the other of a painter from provincial Westphalia—come from the outer stylistic and geographical boundaries of their respective arts. Surely they cannot suffice to constitute a trend. But what art and literature could not undertake, since their traditions prevented them from identifying the heavens with a pagan

37. That Camillo's theater was, among other things, a collection of volumes dealing with all aspects of the world, a Renaissance version of the mediaeval *Summa*, is quite certain. Only so can it be explained that Alessandro Cittolini could plagiarize his work. We have furthermore the express statement by B. Parthenius that he saw some of the volumes of which Camillo's oeuvre was composed (*loc.cit.*): "Ad summam talem verborum vel multitudinem vel varietatem Venetiis, eodem [that is, Camillo] monstrante, in magnis suis voluminibus repositam collectamque vidisse memini." Cousin says

(Liruti, *op.cit.*, p. 123), "Chartarum incredibilis moles theatro destinata fuit."

38. Museum in Münster, Westphalia. See, E. Castelli ed., *Umanesimo e il demoniaco nell' arte*, Rome, 1952, pl. 53.

39. F. A. Doni, *Mondi celesti, terrestri, ed infernali degli Academici Pellegrini*, 1st ed., Venice, 1552, two years after the appearance of Camillo's theater. I am quoting from the Venice edition of 1606, pp. 12-14.

40. F. A. Doni, *Marmi*, Florence, 1552, p. 101.



edifice, was well within the province of the theater, where more neutral forms were not opposed to the adoption of a new significance. It was here that our theme took root and developed, until it was sufficiently matured to impress its stamp upon the other visual arts. What had been a mere formal coincidence now became a task, for the theater could not rest content with letting the auditorium alone carry the celestial significance: the stage was to have its share; and since its rectangular shape was ill adapted to accommodating a semicircle of steps, the theater of the heavens had to be simulated by perspective tricks. The whole building was turned into an amphitheater, but into one that was only partly three-dimensional, the rest being suggested by fictitious means. The resulting break in aesthetic continuity was a boon to artists of the Mannerist creed accustomed to the game of upsetting and shuffling levels of reality.

The history of ideas favored a theater in the round,<sup>41</sup> much as the practice of performance contradicted it, for it had long been believed that the Roman theater, upon which much later custom was based, had been of fully circular shape, even when not used for games of gladiators and beasts but as the setting for a stage. There had been a strong mediaeval tradition to that effect, exemplified in some of the French and German illustrations of Terence.<sup>42</sup> And that conceptions of this kind were still current during the Renaissance can be seen in Cesariano's edition of Vitruvius (1521), which contains the woodcut of a round domical structure, a tholos, as he calls it himself, which purports at the same time to be a theater: an illustration, if you will, to Doni's heavenly tribunal.<sup>43</sup>

Above all the circular scheme found authentic support from ancient theory itself. Vitruvius had taught that the theater—the amphitheater he did not describe—was an acoustic sounding board so designed that the sounds emitted by actors standing on the front edge and in the middle of the stage could penetrate equally into all outlying parts.<sup>44</sup> This theory presupposed a circular form and indicated that the *scenae frons* cut across an incomplete but always implicit theater in the round. Consistently Vitruvius described it as a simile of cosmic harmony, explaining that its central part corresponded to the heavens and the zodiacal signs. The "orchestra" was to be imagined as round, although in fact it was bisected by the stage; four equilateral triangles were inscribed in its circumference, the outer points of which recalled "the 12 celestial signs, which astrologists calculate from the music of the stars."<sup>45</sup> The Renaissance theorists Cesariano<sup>46</sup> and Barbaro<sup>47</sup> enlarged upon this scheme and construed a theater whose entire plan, all the way to its outermost walls, was ruled by interlocking triangles.

As a musical device Vitruvius' theater was a fitting prototype for later theaters of the heavens similarly dedicated to the task of reflecting the chant of angels and the harmonies of the spheres.<sup>48</sup> But whereas the Roman theater mirrored the heavens at all times as a frozen image of the musical

41. This very much neglected aspect of theatrical history will be dealt with *in extenso* by Professor Leslie Hotson in a book written to substantiate his thesis that Shakespeare's plays were performed in the arena while the rest of the Elizabethan structure was used as an amphitheater. An excellent example of a performance entirely in the round is the famous one of the *Castle of Perseverance* (14th century) (E. K. Chambers, *The Medieval Stage*, Oxford, 1903, II, p. 437). The interest of the Renaissance in amphitheaters is codified by Justus Lipsius in his books *De amphitheatro liber*, Antwerp, 1584, and *De amphitheatris quae extra Romam Libellus*, Antwerp, 1584. In the fifteenth century and until 1522 it was habitual to give a *rappresentazione sacra* in the Colosseum: a performance that took place not in the Arena, but in a limited part of the former stalls, so that the huge building was divided into a part serving as a stage and another serving as the auditorium. See P. Colagrossi, *L'anfiteatro flavio nei suoi venti secoli di storia*, Florence, 1913, pp. 177 and 186.

42. See the detailed and excellent analysis in M. Hermann, *Forschungen zur Deutschen Theatergeschichte des Mittelalters*

*und der Renaissance*, Berlin, 1914, pp. 279f.

43. C. Cesariano's Vitruvius, Como, 1521, p. lxxxiii v with inscription: "Rotundarum Monopterarum et Peripterarum Aedium in Summo Tholata fere perindicata Figura" to which the text adds: "Ma questa Orthographica figura del Teatro puo dimostrare e perservire a le supradicte aede rotunde—Monoptere: quale hano il Tholo come pro forma di sopra ho facto." Reproduced in H. Leclerc, *Les origines italiennes de l'architecture théâtrale moderne*, Paris, 1946, pl. 3.

44. Vitruvius *De architectura* 3.8 and 5.1.

45. *ibid.*, 6.1.

46. Vitruvius, edition of 1521, H. Leclerc, *op.cit.*, pl. 4.

47. Vitruvius, Venice edition of 1556, H. Leclerc, *op.cit.*, pl. 6.

48. About visual representations of the harmony of the spheres see L. Curtius, "Musik der Sphaeren," *Mitteil. d. Deutschen archaeologischen Instituts, Römische Abteil.*, 1935, p. 348; J. Baltrusaitis, *Cosmographie chrétienne dans l'art du Moyen Age*, Paris, 1939; Charles de Tolnay, "The Music of the Universe," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery*, 1943, p. 83.

nature of the world, the same cannot be said of its successors during the sixteenth century. Since their circularity was completed on the stage, they could never retain their celestial quality for very long, for its duration depended upon the vagaries of the plot. Their history began with their scenic part consisting of a cloud *décor*. Only later did artists take the more adventurous step of extending the forms of the amphitheater to the stage and of thus encompassing the entire room under one continuous form and significance. It was impossible, in that case, to make the completion of the theater in the round part of the sequence of dramatic events; it became an accessory scene and was appended at the beginning or at the end, like the overture and the final chorus in opera.

That something new was afoot first becomes apparent in Vasari's description of the performance in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, put on in 1565 under his own direction to celebrate the wedding of Don Francesco de' Medici with Giovanna d'Austria. He had staked his prestige on the creation of stage sets for the *intermedie*, whose splendor and variety was to surpass all that had been known. The subject was the history of Amor and Psyche. As the curtain fell before the first act, the spectators saw before them a representation of the neighborhood of Sta. Trinità in Florence with a little cloud above it which expanded through the action of an invisible machine until it filled the stage and became the abode of all the Olympian gods. The excitement of the moment must have been intense and Vasari tried to do justice to it by surpassing himself in the use of glowing metaphors: "The steps," he wrote, "which surrounded the room, were so well arranged, and so great was the loveliness of the well-adorned ladies, of whom a great number of the most beautiful, the noblest, and the richest had been invited, and such was the quality of the lords, cavaliers and noblemen accommodated above them and throughout the rest of the room, that, when the lights were lighted, the curtain fell, and the luminous perspective on the stage became manifest, it seemed that Paradise itself had opened with all the choirs of the angels; a belief which was marvelously strengthened by a sweet, ample, and skillfully fashioned harmony of instruments and voices, which came from that part [the stage] a short time afterward."<sup>49</sup> Thus Vasari describes the impressions of a spectator present at the beginning of the play, who turns first to the ladies and gentlemen in the stalls—although as yet without recourse to an opera glass—and then to the stage; and his thesis is that the latter in all its festive array only continues and reflects the glitter of the fashionable world resplendent in its jewels and *grandes toilettes*. His attitude is a normal one so far for any eye-witness to a brilliant theatrical event. It is the manner of his account that sets him apart, for he stresses the auditorium much more than later writers would, and blurs the distinction between it and the stage, as if there were no difference between courtiers and Olympian divinities and even between clouds and wooden steps. His sensation of an all-inclusive celestial significance seems to make him forget divergencies of form.

It would be wrong, however, to believe that in writing as he did Vasari was merely carried away by what he felt. If one opens Apuleius' text, from which the story of Amor and Psyche was drawn, one finds that Jupiter convoked the assembly of the gods—the same that was to

49. G. Vasari, *Descrizione dell' apparato fatto in Firenze per le nozze dell' Illustrissimo ed Eccellentissimo Don Francesco de' Medici Principe di Firenze e Siena e della Serenissima Regina Giovanna d'Austria*, Vasari, *Opere*, Florence, 1882, VIII, p. 572. It became a frequent habit from now on to compare the theater with the heavens, for instance at the festivals on occasion of the visit of Archduke Charles of Austria in 1569: "Essendosi la commedia recitata in quella grandissima sala che un paradiso sembra piuttosto che opera di edificio fabricata da humano artefice, per la sua maravigliosa bellezza" (*Raccolta delle feste fatte in Firenze dalli Ill.<sup>li</sup> ed Ecc. mi nostri signori e padroni il Sig. Duca e il Sig. Principe di Firenze e Siena nella venuta del Serenissimo Arciduca Carlo d'Austria per honorarne la presenza di sua Altezza*, Florence,

1569, p. 3). In the early seventeenth century the top gallery for spectators in the Hotel de Bourgogne in Paris was called "le paradize" (J. Fransen, *Documents inédits de l'Hotel de Bourgogne*, in *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*, XXXIV, p. 342). The name has persisted to the present day. (For a literary reference see, for instance, Flaubert's *L'éducation sentimentale*, Edition Nelson, Paris, 1951, p. 123.) The mixture of spectators and angels is found in Vasari's own decorations for the Grande Sala in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence. As a means of filling an irregular angle caused by the mediaeval groundplan of the building he introduced a balustrade with human and angelic onlookers leaning over it and gazing down into the room.

meet again on the stage of the Palazzo Vecchio—into a “heavenly theater,” where they were to receive Psyche into their midst,<sup>50</sup> and that among members of the Olympian elite the place was also known as “the theater of the gods.”<sup>51</sup> The Olympians were apparently not averse to imitating their Greek and Roman worshipers by using theaters, as the latter did at times, as conference halls and places of debate.<sup>52</sup> There was thus relevant literary precedent for Vasari’s notion of matching auditorium and stage under a comprehensive reciprocal significance. He combined Apuleius’ text with the contemporary tradition of a theater of the heavens and thus arrived at seeing the seats alight with sidereal radiance, while the clouds on the stage formed themselves in his mind into the likeness of an Olympian amphitheater. Where meanings were so firmly intertwined, differences of forms were irrelevant.

A further glance at Vasari’s text suggests that, although he believed in their momentary unity, he did not regard auditorium and stage as equivalent. The stage was empty when he let his glance wander over it, displaying only buildings and clouds, and even the madrigal, which was to mark the appearance of the gods, had not yet been intoned. When it began to fill the room with its sweet interlace of harmonies, its role was merely to confirm a visual impression of unison previously obtained. Thus the emphasis in the festive circle fell upon the ladies and gentlemen of the court, who were fully assembled and available to carry their share of the celestial significance; and since they in turn were only attendants and most of them subordinate to the prince and his spouse, in whose honor the performance took place, it was to these notables that the task was assigned of holding the key to the display. Very wisely Vasari refrained from carrying his simile that far; for if courtiers were like angels and the theater an image of Paradise, then the prince and his bride must be likened to the Virgin Mary and Christ, and their place in the middle of the auditorium to that of these sacred personalities, after Mary had been crowned among the jubilation of the heavenly host. Vasari was very well aware, of course, as was every other member of the audience, that Giovanna had received her diadem that very day. Even an extreme desire for flattery could not have induced a man to venture a blasphemy such as this, much as he may have been tempted by the courtly atmosphere to skirt the edge of prohibited ground.<sup>53</sup>

It follows that, where such ideas prevailed, the gods on the stage could not keep up with princely excellence and that they were to be interpreted as allegories of the bridegroom and bride, their virtues, and the benefits which the country was to derive from them. Later writers of festivals and operas were explicit on that score, whereas Vasari does not as yet go all the way. It suffices, however, to open the *Raggionamenti*,<sup>54</sup> his confessions as an artist courtier, to realize that the time for the dynastic interpretation of mythology was at hand. This book consists of fictitious talks between the master and a young Medici prince, during which every one of his own frescoes in the Palazzo Vecchio—the very place where he directed the performance of 1565—is interpreted as a simile of the perfections of Cosimo, the reigning duke. Here as later in the *intermedie* the assumption was made that the gods were subordinate manifestations of princely qualities.<sup>55</sup>

Speaking in terms of histrionic conditions today, Vasari’s performance was thus almost a theater in reverse, for the spectators were the chief protagonists, while it was the actors’ task to supple-

50. *Metamorphoses* 6. 23: “Quo metu statim completo caelesti theatro pro sede sublimi sedens procerus Jupiter sic enunciat.”

51. *Metamorphoses* 6. 16: Venus says to Psyche, whom she sends on an errand to Hades: “Quia me necesse est indidem delitum theatrum deorum frequentare.”

52. Cicero *Flaccus* 7; Nepos *Timol.* 4; Livy 24. 39 and 33. 28; Tacitus *Hist.* 2. 80.

53. How far this desire could go, can be seen from Vasari’s picture in the middle of the ceiling of the Grande Sala in the Palazzo Vecchio, showing Cosimo surrounded by an enormous

yellow halo and a wreath of putti holding emblems.

54. G. Vasari, *op.cit.*, VIII, p. 11.

55. The habit of identifying the main personalities of the court with pagan divinities goes back to the court poetry of the fifteenth century. For instance Bellincioni, *Rime*, ed. Fanfani, Bologna, 1876, p. 38: “Quivi era Febo colla bionda chioma” (meaning Gian Galeazzo Sforza driving in a carriage). The date at which this form of flattery reached the visual arts and the theater is a moot question, into which I cannot enter here.





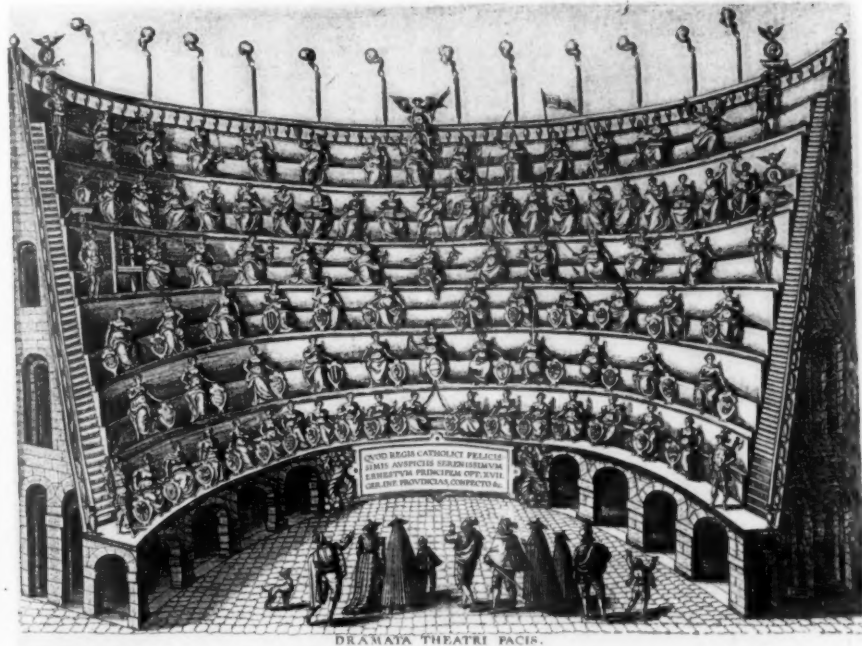
1. F. Botticini, *Paradise*. London, National Gallery



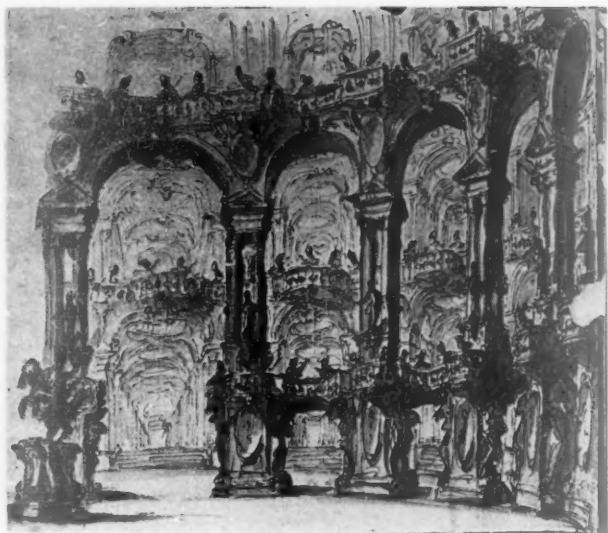
2. A. Caron, *Massacre under the Roman Triumvirs*. Paris, Louvre (photo: Bulloz)



3. H. tom Ring, *Last Judgment*, drawing  
Vienna, Albertina Museum



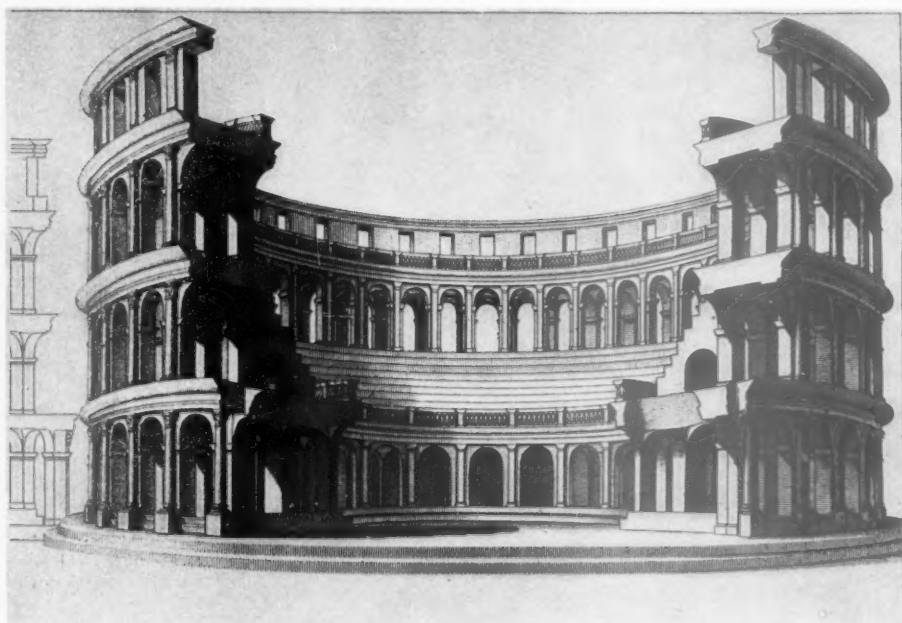
4. *Theater of Peace*, decoration for the entry of Archduke Ernest into Antwerp in 1594  
(Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art)



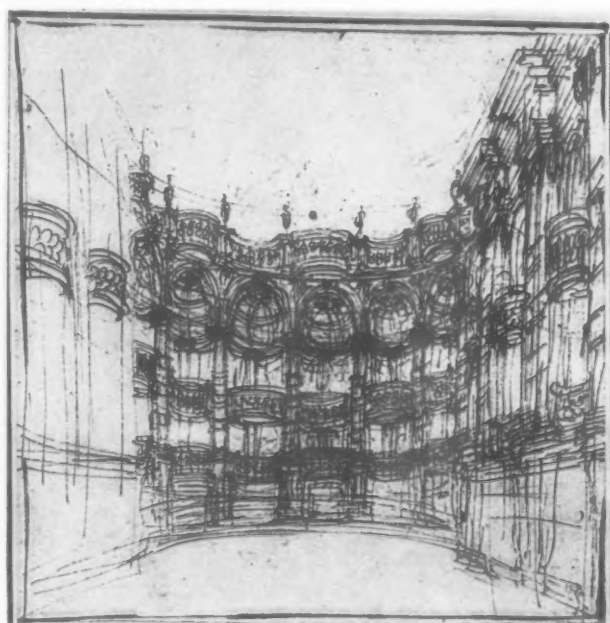
5. Design for Royal Amphitheatrical Hall, Italian, mid-XVIII century. Vienna, Theater Museum (photo: Osterreich. Nationalbibliothek)



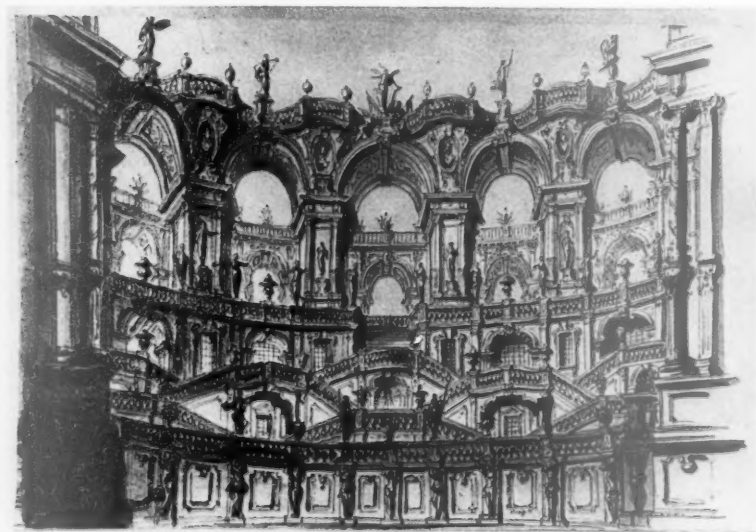
6. Member of the Bibiena family, Stage Design for Royal Amphitheater Vienna, Academy of Fine Arts



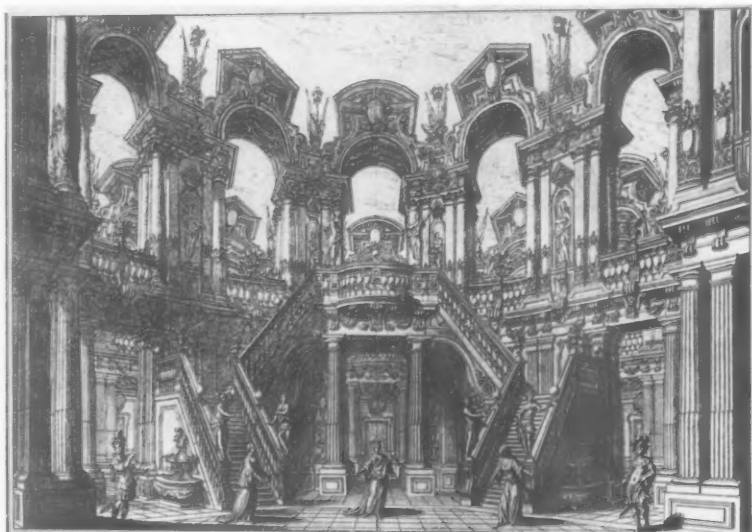
7. Padre A. Pozzo, Stage Design for Amphitheater, 1700



8. Ferdinando Galli Bibiena, Stage Design for Amphitheater Munich, Graphisches Kabinett



9. Member of the Bibiena family, Stage Design for Amphitheater Vienna, Academy of Fine Arts



10. Giuseppe Galli Bibiena, Stage Design for Amphitheater London, British Museum (photo: Freeman)



ment and reflect their concentrated excellence. But what would seem a strange perversion to us was in fact a very natural distribution of emphasis, for wedding feasts are bound to put the bride and bridegroom in the center of events, and to relate the action on the stage, if such action there is, to their prospects and happy eminence. It had been the custom for some time to let the gods descend from the sky to congratulate a princely pair, laying down their rule for a while, as they humbled themselves and pronounced their compliments. The famous Paradise, for instance, which Leonardo constructed in 1490 for the marriage of Galeazzo Sforza and Isabella d'Aragon, had ended with the planetary divinities stepping out of their predetermined course and reciting pretty verses in honor of the bride.<sup>56</sup> There was an older stage of the custom, which may help us to understand the meaning of theatrical practice during the later Renaissance: When the gods appeared at the wedding of Costanza Sforza and Camilla d'Aragon in Pesaro in 1475, they had more to bestow than mere pleasantries, for they still possessed their old astrological potency and their presence was a magic guarantee of good fortune.<sup>57</sup> A step further back into the Italian and European past we find at the wedding feast actors—*joculatores*, as they were then called—embodying fertility spirits, who help by their magic touch to endow the bride with progeny.<sup>58</sup> It is not farfetched to suggest that the relation of the stage to the prince in Vasari's time retained some of this older reciprocity: while bridegroom and bride were the focus of all the festive activity, the gods still commanded some of the ancient respect as harbingers of good omen, and thus were protected against dissolving entirely into dynastic allegory.<sup>59</sup> It is undeniable, on the other hand, that what we called the reversal of the relation between auditorium and stage had a very striking and, on the whole, unfortunate effect upon the action. For since nothing could take place for its own sake, and since the unfolding of events was punctuated by periodic references to the prince and his spouse, it was impossible for the drama to evolve from within and to show any real consistency. Instead, there was emphasis on display, which, together with an increasing and inevitable inanity of the plot, marked the productions of the musical theater, particularly during the Baroque.<sup>60</sup>

## III

After the auspicious beginning in 1565 the next step in the development of the heavenly theater was a seemingly retrogressive one, for the structure that was built in 1581<sup>61</sup> for the wedding of the Duc de Joyeuse with Marie de Lorraine was a semicircular amphitheater, to be used like a viewing stand for spectators at a tournament. It marked an apparent return to Camillo's scheme. It suffices, however, to peruse either of the two identical poems—one in French, the other in Latin—which the court poet Dorat wrote in celebration of the event, to realize that this theater was not a repetition of an ancient mnemotechnic scheme.<sup>62</sup> It was an instrument of display; and while it had lost some of its former metaphysical charge, it had now become a tool of dynastic pretensions

56. Bellincioni, *op.cit.*, II, p. 208. See also E. Flechsig, *Die Dekorationen der modernen Bühne in Italien von den Anfängen bis zum Schluss des 16. Jahrhunderts*, Dresden, 1894, p. 18.

57. T. de Marinis, *Le nozze di Costanza Sforza e Camilla d'Aragona celebrate a Pesaro nel Maggio 1475*, Rome, 1946, with illustrations. The Sun, for instance, says:

"Tal influenza el mio pianeta infunde:  
Contra el lor nodo non porrà mai forza,  
Fortuna cum virtù serà congiunta,  
Fin che se spoglia de la morte scorza."

58. Decision of the Concilium Ravennate of 1286 and Aquisgranense of 1316, canon 83. Both in A. Muratori, *Dissertatio sopra le antichità italiane*, Milan, 1751, XXIX, p. 848. For further literature on mediaeval wedding customs see W. Liungmann, *Traditionswanderung Euphrat-Rhein*, *Studien zur Geschichte der Volksbrauche*, Folklore Fellowship Communi-

cations no. 118-119, Helsinki, 1937-1938, *passim*; and R. Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge, 1952, pp. 165f.

59. This is expressly asserted about France under Catherine de' Medici by F. Yates, *Poésie et musique dans les magnificences au mariage du Duc de Joyeuse*, Paris, 1581, in *Colloques internationaux du centre national de la recherche scientifique*, Paris, 1954, Sciences Humaines, p. 252.

60. In Venice, where the main development of opera in the seventeenth century took place, this situation was made worse by the fact that there was no court, and yet the habits derived from court performances were very largely continued.

61. F. Yates, *op.cit.*, p. 251, and *The French Academies of the 16th Century*, London, 1947, p. 273.

62. J. Dorat, *Œuvres*, ed. Marty-Laveaux, Paris, p. 29 (in French) and *idem*, *Poemata*, Paris, 1586, p. 251 (in Latin).



so immersed in royal and astrological significance that its message, in its outspokenness, surpassed by far the vaguer claims on behalf of the absolute prince advanced at the Florentine court.

Above all its celestial character had ceased to be a matter of personal poetic fancy, as it had been in Vasari's time, and had become a formula, an established metaphor. Dorat proclaimed the identity of heaven and theater and subordinated to this thought all consideration of architectural fact: "One saw an amphitheater . . . which represented the starry sky, in its movements large and small, its round shape in perfect view; although of lesser size, it seemed to encompass the larger heaven and its Lord, so that sky and amphitheater became one."<sup>63</sup> In the verses that follow there is the same perplexing back and forth between architecture and astronomy, for we learn that in the middle of the scaffolding one saw seven large burning globes pursuing their planetary course,<sup>64</sup> a difficult feat, one would presume, where they could be waylaid by combustible wooden steps. The improbable tale continues with the report that there were "golden cabinets of the gods"<sup>65</sup> filled with multitudes of undulating stars and other intermittent lights, whose periodic brilliance carried them out into the open tournament court.<sup>66</sup> One would be satisfied with regarding all this as a recital of a fireworks were it not that one reads that the chief personalities of the court participated in the astronomical display: the King, Henry III, entered the theater as the *roi soleil*<sup>67</sup> and shed such radiance as he went that he outshone a "moon" in the form of a lighted lamp; the Queen, Catherine de Medici, was the planet Venus and competed as such with other celestial lights;<sup>68</sup> and the Queen Mother was symbolized by a rainbow.<sup>69</sup> Faced with details such as these the reader finds it beyond his means to decide which of the luminosities described were personalities of the court, and which only part of a pyrotechnic display, for he is not given the tools with which to distinguish between "astronomy" and courtly hyperbole.<sup>70</sup> The poet is so much concerned with expressing the notion of a royal theater of the world that he prefers the ambiguities it entails to anything that can be clearly said.

It must be maintained, at any rate, that the amphitheater of 1581 marked an important and necessary stage in the gradual consolidation of our theme. It is likely that it soon became known in Florence where the presence in France of a queen from the house of Medici must have drawn attention to the theatrical life under her patronage. It was in Florence in 1589 that the amphitheater was first continued on the stage: a momentous step which one would hardly have dared to undertake had there not been a previous crystallization of symbolic intent. The *intermedie* which saw this decisive advance were the famous ones for the wedding of Ferdinando de Medici and Christine de Lorraine,<sup>71</sup> well known for the fact that there the future founders of

63. Taken from the French version, the Latin being a little shorter:

"L'Amphitheatre on veit jusques au ciel haussé  
Qui du ciel estoillé representoit l'exemple  
Du grand au petit pied, aiant la rondeur ample  
Au parfait racourci, si bien qu'on eut pensé  
Au patron du grand ciel le petit compassé  
Et eut on pris le ciel pour un amphitheatre  
Ou le theatre pris pour coeleste theatre."

64. "Qu'on voioit au milieu des eschaffaux reluire  
Sept grands globes ardents, qui en tours et retours  
Par erreur non errant entresuivoient leurs cours."

65. "Des deux costez estoient les cabinetz des Dieux  
Tels qu'on dict que Vulcan au premier temps du monde  
Forgea a chacun Dieu d'or en figure ronde.  
Dans chacun cabinet comme astre flamboiant  
D'estoilles un grand nombre on voioit ondoiant."

66. "Autres feux vagabonds descouroient par la lice  
Comme l'astre jumeau qui sur le mas se glisse  
Ou tel qu'on voit de nuit flambeaux estincelans  
Signe du grand ardeur fondre seillons brillans  
Qui ores paroissent, ore perdans leur flamme  
Se cachoient dedans l'air."

67. "Mesmement quand le Roy sur son char y entroit

Qui comme un grand soleil estival se monstroist  
Et jectant son aspect vers la lampe lunaire  
Plus il s'en esloignoit, plus il la rendoit claire."

68. "Mais sur tous ces flambeaux on voioit reluisant  
Comme l'astre à Venus nostre Reine regnante."

69. "Et comme de Junon l'arc a mille couleurs  
De la mère du Roy sortoit mille splendeurs."

70. The cosmic and musical theory of monarchical rule had, in fact, been far advanced in France, particularly by Jean Bodin, who was convinced that the rules of proportion applied to government and that it was the task of kings to maintain a harmonic mean between aristocratic and popular rule. See *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem*, 1566 ed., in *Œuvres philosophiques de Jean Bodin*, ed. P. Mesnard, Paris, 1951, pp. 387f. and 422f.; and the entire last chapter in his *Les six livres de la Republique*, Lyon, 1579. It is likely that the emphasis upon cosmic harmony in connection with dynastic rule, which is characteristic of the Florentine *intermedie* of 1589, was due to French influence.

71. B. de Rossi, *Descrizione dell' apparato e degl' intermedii fatti per la commedia rappresentata in Firenze nelle nozze de' Serenissimi Don Ferdinando de' Medici e Madama Cristina di Loreno, Gran Duchi di Toscana*, Florence, 1589, p. 16.

opera, the poets, Count Bardi and Rinuccini and the composer Caccini had their first chance to cooperate on a monumental scale. Buontalenti was in charge of stage design and machines and must be credited with the invention of the new artistic device. After the drapery had been withdrawn, which "had hidden the beauties of the scene and of its perspective . . . the eyes of everyone beheld the whole room turned into a perfect amphitheater, with the perspective in front and its Corinthian architecture so joined to the other architectural parts that by such means the amphitheater became complete": a surprise effect that seemed to have been obtained by closing part of the stage with a backdrop painted in perspective.<sup>72</sup>

When the spectators had recovered from their surprise, the play began; its theme—and this is of course not a matter of chance—was the nature of cosmic harmony and its descent from the heavenly spheres. When the amphitheater had vanished, the goddess of harmony appeared on the stage, and after her, amidst the starry sky, the "nymphs" of the stellar spheres, necessity, the Parchae and the planetary divinities, finally the representatives of the various musical scales,<sup>73</sup> all of whom joined in a chorus of eulogies for the princely pair; at the climax of their song of praise they produced their own version of our theme: "Let us therefore weave garlands for such great kings; let them be the flowers and wreaths of Paradise; their royal foreheads shall be circled with stars, with the sun and the moon and other beautiful things."<sup>74</sup> It was the function of the amphitheater on the stage to anticipate such later accolades by focusing the attention of all upon the court and the prince. Empty and circular, a mere architectural shell, it guided the spectators' glance toward the personalities of the court. De Rossi, who wrote the first official report, was well aware of this for he speaks of the combined splendor of the gold that enriched the scenery and of the jewels worn by the ladies of the court,<sup>75</sup> and he relates how this hybrid magnificence had been prepared before it all began by the spectacle of the ladies in their seats shining like series of scintillating stars.<sup>76</sup> Since its function was merely to illustrate what every spectator knew in advance, the courtly theater had a way of always returning to the same fundamental theme.

As far as our amphitheater was concerned, its future course of development was now clear. If there was to be any further advance, it had to consist of abolishing its supplementary capacity and endowing it with human significance, an evolution for which there was no precedent in the traditions of the musical stage, and which had to depend upon outside influence.

It had been customary in Florence, ever since it had submitted to dynastic rule, to begin a princely wedding feast by receiving the bride at the city gates and then to conduct her through triumphal arches and decorated streets to the Duomo and the Palazzo Vecchio. When Eleanor of Toledo entered her future capital in 1539,<sup>77</sup> the decorations at the city gate had still been on a small scale, consisting of an antiportico, which may or may not have been embellished with painting and sculptures. But the idea took root, and when the future Philip II of Spain visited Antwerp in 1549,<sup>78</sup> the colony of Florentine tradesmen there felt obliged to show their joy and patriotic pride by erecting a lengthy marble porticus, which contained—and here we touch

72. "S'appresentò agli occhi di giascheduno tutta la sala uno amfiteatro perfetto (perciocchè la Prospettiva che era in faccia con la sua architettura Corintia si congiungeva con l'apparato." The word *apparato* seems to refer to the wooden architecture on the stage in contrast to the architecture painted on a flat surface, so that it must be assumed that the perspective effect was obtained by a combination of two- and three-dimensional components. The word *apparato* can also refer to the architecture of the auditorium or to any other architectural decoration, provided it be three-dimensional.

73. A. Warburg, "I costumi teatrali per gli intermezzi del 1589," *Gesammelte Schriften*, Leipzig, 1832, I, p. 259.

74. B. de Rossi, *op.cit.*, p. 21:

"Tesciam dunque ghirlande a sì gran Regi  
E sien di paradiso i fiori e i fregi  
A lor fronte regal s'intreci stelle  
E sole e luna e cose alte e più belle."

75. "E percotendo i lumi e riflettendo in tanto oro quanto aveva quella parete [the painted backdrop], fra esso, e gli adornamenti che, come abbiamo detto, avevano intorno le giovane gentildonne, avrebbe quello splendore della regia sala potuto, non ch' altro, abbagliar la vista della Fenice."

76. "Accesi i lumi dell'apparato e percotendo negli ornamenti e nelle preziose gioie che in testa, in dito, e nelle vesti avevan le gentildonne sedenti, parevano tutti i gradi carichi di stelle che scintilassero, i quali trassero à se tutti gli occhi de circostanti."

77. P. Gori, *Firenze magnifica: Le feste fiorentine attraverso i secoli*, Florence, 1930, p. 119.

78. C. Grapheus, *Spectaculorum in susceptione Philippi Hisp. Princ. Divo Caroli V. Caes. F. An. 1549 Antwerpiae aediorum mirificus apparatus*, ill. H 4.



upon our theme—a pictorial self-appraisal of Florentine rule. There were silver statues of the duke and of older members of his house, of the great poets and artists Florence had produced—among them of Michelangelo, who was still alive—and finally of the towns which prospered under the Medici reign. Such a program, enlarged or abridged, was to be displayed in many other similar temporary fabrics far into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

It was in 1565, at the wedding of Francesco de' Medici with Giovanna d'Austria,<sup>79</sup> that the first great change occurred, for within a plan of decoration comprising the entire town the specifically Florentine display was divided between a *porticus* at the city gate, with the representations of local attainments in the past and of the attitudes promising their continuance, and a "theater" uncomfortably squeezed into one of the minor squares, and devoted to the family of the reigning duke. Vincenzo de' Rossi and Borghini, who were in charge, had attempted to mask an awkward meeting of streets by constructing an irregular octagon—the "theater" to which we have just referred—and by making the entrances terminate each in a triumphal arch. Knowing that civic pride had had its say at the city gates, they reserved all the walls of their structure for dynastic display, and exhibited statues of all the members of the family, beginning with the father of Cosimo "pater patriae."

It was thus the accident of architectural circumstance which introduced the notion of the theater into the reception of the princely bride. But once the theme was conceived, it tended to persist, and in 1589, at the entry into Florence of Christine de Lorraine, it received a preferential place among the decorations of the town.<sup>80</sup> As the future duchess approached from Torre degli Agli, where she had been joined by her groom, she saw before her at the city gate a "theater," almost a temple and almost a triumphal arch, which combined various features from the decorations of 1565. Its shape was that of an open, somewhat flattened octagon, and its paintings related to the history of Florence, to its chief quarters and to other Tuscan towns.<sup>81</sup>

In this "theater" the princess was crowned Archduchess of Tuscany. As she knelt before the altar to receive the diadem from the duke, she was surrounded by a conflux of armed guards and of 2,000 members of the clergy that must have far exceeded the capacities of the little edifice; two orchestras played and cannons boomed; the archbishop of Pisa officiated. Once more a "theater" had become an image of the heavens, a more convincing one this time than ever before, since at the center of its ecclesiastic parade there was the installation of a "Queen" reminiscent of the coronation of the Virgin Mary. No wonder that this part of the ritual became stabilized and that henceforth princely brides had to stop in a *ricetto* before the walls, to be crowned, before they could enter into the city and upon their reign. Such Florentine ceremonies as that of 1608 and of 1662 were merely repetitions of the model of 1589.<sup>82</sup>

The climax of our story comes with the Florentine festivities in 1600 on occasion of the marriage of Maria de' Medici with Henry IV of France, the same festivities which saw the final expulsion of the comedy from its accompaniment of *intermedie* and the consequent emergence

79. P. Ginori Conti: *Apparato per le nozze di Francesco de' Medici e di Giovanna d'Austria*, Florence, 1936. G. Vasari, *op.cit.*, VIII, p. 545. The theater stood at the corner of the Carnesecchi and was open on both sides. The combination of theater and triumphal arch was to become a frequent theatrical motive, which was to occur, for instance, in the work of Bérain (*Archives Nationales*, Paris, O' 3238, no. 38).

80. R. Gualterotti, *Descrizione del regale apparato per le nozze della Serenissima Madama Cristina di Loreno, moglie del Serenissimo Don Ferdinando Medici III. Granduca di Toscana*, Florence, 1589, p. 17.

81. While there seems to be no artistic records of Florentine coronation theaters except for Borghini's very sketchy drawing for the structure erected at the Carnesecchi in 1565 (Ginori-Conti, *op.cit.*, figs. 8 and 9), there is an engraving of a

similar structure erected in The Hague at the end of the seventeenth century: A. Heinsius, *Relation du voyage de sa Majesté britannique en Hollande et de la réception qui lui a été faite*, The Hague, 1692, pl. 1. Gualterotti calls the specimen of 1589 (p. 4) "il primo arco trionfale," but goes on to say, on p. 17, that "nel primo aspetto sembra un meraviglioso teatro e in qualche parte un leggiadro e bene adornato tempio per le molte pitture tutte al oglio lavorate e per le molte statue."

82. Anon., *Descrizione delle feste fatte nelle reali nozze de Serenissimi Principi di Toscana D. Cosimo de Medici e Maria Maddalena Archiduchessa d'Austria*, Florence, 1608, p. 5. Anon., *Memorie delle feste fatte a Firenze per le reali nozze de' Serenissimi Sposi Cosimo Principe di Toscana e Margherita Luisa Principessa d'Orleans*, Florence, 1662, p. 42.



of opera.<sup>83</sup> Since Maria, a Florentine by birth, was married by proxy, there could be no *ricetto* before the walls to welcome her into town. It occurred to Buontalenti, who was again in charge, as an ancient and proven servant of the family, that this circumstance provided him with an unusual opportunity: it would be possible to introduce the allegories from the nonexistent *theatrum gloriae* into the semicircular structure on the stage and thus to provide it with that added magnificence that it had failed to summon before. This in turn meant, as he realized, that a scene whose importance had been thus increased could not be held to its prefatory role, and that it would be necessary to employ it in a new capacity. Buontalenti decided to append it at the end and to make of it the culmination and fulfilment of the plot.

The fable was that of Aurora and Cefalus. Passing over the intrigues which make up the story, it may suffice to say that at the end the hero was raised up into the heavens and among the gods, as an example of the destiny reserved for kings and noble souls. Thus an assembly of the gods preceded the amphitheater, reversing the situation in 1589, when the latter had been a prelude to a similar gathering.

What follows is worth quoting in some detail in the words of Michelangelo Buonarroti the Younger, official chronicler of the festival: "The scene which up to then had shown only things natural, supernatural, celestial, earthly or maritime . . . , now changed with the same agility which all previous transformations had shown into a large and magnificent theater of half oval shape and Doric design, which corresponded to and equaled the rest of the room, divided as it was by gilded columns and niches with their golden statues and cornices."<sup>84</sup> Up to this point it is the same scene, although presumably now completely three-dimensional, as in 1589. But Buontalenti continues, and here we find ourselves on completely new ground: "Many persons came upon various paths, who, through their noble costumes, represented heroes and other great men, here foregathered in order to honor the superb carriage of fame, that was expected to make its appearance soon. They had sat down and placed themselves upon the high graded steps, when unexpectedly there arose a machine, whose height was to surpass all that had been previously seen. It was a magnificently decorated carriage, which bore erect upon its most exposed part a woman, the impersonation of fame, with wings, her hair wind-blown and spread out, trumpet and olive branch in hand, and her garment all painted with eyes. She stood with one foot upon a great ball to indicate her superiority over things on earth, and lifted the other, as if she were going to dance or fly. After she had come up from beneath, there arose after her the pyramidal shape of her car, which broadened as it gained height and carried upon it other damsels" in Roman dress. "This stupendous mass dilated and grew, until one would have believed that at the end it would exceed all bounds. Finally it grew to such an extent, that it had to come to a halt, since it could not mount any further after having reached the sky."<sup>85</sup> The damsels, sixteen in number,

83. Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Descrizione delle felicissime nozze della Cristianissima Maestà Madama Maria Medici Regina di Francia e di Navarra*, Florence, 1600, p. 35. The opera was called *Rapimento di Cefalo*. The text was by G. Chiabrera, the music by G. Caccini, except for the choruses written by St. Venturi del Nibbio and L. Bati. We know that Caccini's contribution, which is now lost, was in the new recitativo style of the Camerata (Mich. Buonarroti, *op.cit.*, p. 21).

84. Mich. Buonarroti, *op.cit.*, p. 35: "La scena che fino allora o cose naturali o sopranaturali e celesti e terrene e marittime più volte scabielvolmente mostrate avesse, per nuova sembianza con quella agilità che in tutti gli altri mutamenti s'era veduta, si trasformò in un magnifico e gran teatro di mezzo ovato d'ordine dorico, che divisato per dorate colonne e nicchie con loro statue d'oro e corniciamenti faceva eguale corrispondenza al teatro stesso."

85. "Vennervi per diversi sentieri molte persone che di nobilissimi vestiti ornate rappresentavano eroi e grand'huomini

giungenti quivi ad onorar il carro superbo della Fama, che poco apresso doveva venire. Onde a sedere su alti gradi già si erano collocati, quando sorse di sotto la scena inaspettatamente la grande macchina la cui altezza passò quella di tutte l'altre. Era questo carro magnificamente ornato; nel summo aringo del quale dritta una donna che per la fama era finta si vide, ed ali grandi aveva e capelli sventolanti e isparsi, con sua tromba, e ramo d'ulivo in mano, e riccamente d'abito tutto dipinto ad occhi vestita. Posato l'un piede sopra una gran palla come dominatrice di tutte le cose inferiori di questo globo minore del mondo, l'altro sollevava a guisa di volatrice o danzante. Apparse essa di sotto terra la prima e appresto di lei il piramidale carro ingrossando sempre nel venir su altre donzelle vi fossero. . . . Agumentosi sempre più lo stupore di questa mole, avvegna dio che, e più e più crescere tuttavia, quando si saria creduto giugnere al fine, si vedesse fuor di misura: e crebbe finalmente tanto che pervenutane la sommità fino al cielo, non potente sormontarsi più, s'arrestò.

were the titular cities of the Tuscan state. "Fame" after singing a few stanzas in honor of Ferdinando, the reigning duke, was caught up into the clouds, "leaving her noble seat empty." Then the carriage began to shrink, leaving, where it had been, the combined and highly colored coats of arms of France and of the Medici. At the end, while on the floor of the stage the cities of Tuscany danced and sang, the huge structure of the car disappeared again under the floor.

This, then, was the scene that ended a festival without parallel, as Buonarroti asserts, since Roman times. For us, who are not concerned with comparative degrees of magnificence, it is mainly a scene that inaugurated a new style. We may forget that Buontalenti, the author of the design, was a late representative of an elegant and mannered art that was hardly made to do justice to a program such as this, for it was not the performance on the stage, which few people had a chance to see, but its description in the official text which was to influence the subsequent history of the arts; and that description, which has so far been overlooked, must be counted among the most important germinal expressions of the Baroque. Several features which we associate with that style occur here for the first time and combine to give to this text a curiously precocious look that belies its early date. There was a general air of portent and surprise such as the sixteenth century had not known to the same extent, generated by the sudden appearance of the vehicle of fame, its inexorable growth, and its dynamic rise to the sky. Where there was such emphasis on display, the architecture surrounding it could not retain a static role. It had been turned into an environment, a frame, that sheltered the active prodigy in its midst, as earlier in Michelangelo's Medici Tombs and later in several of Bernini's works.<sup>86</sup> Finally the connection between frame and central effect was made by the novel means of placing spectators on the stage. They continued the court into the world of make-believe and thus provided that element of illusion, at which many artists of the Baroque were to try their hand, anticipating among other things the sculpted eye-witnesses in the walls adjoining Bernini's *Ecstasy of St. Theresa*.<sup>87</sup> Add to this that between the amphitheater on the stage and the sky overhead there was a relation of meaning that was particularly intense and one finds that all was present for that union of the celestial, the theatrical, and the architectural which was to mark the artistic production of the advanced seventeenth century. It is our claim that of all the trends which converged toward the Baroque none has contributed more toward that union than the one which this essay has tried to describe.

Returning for a moment to the spectators on the stage we notice that their presence betrays a new attitude toward its relation to the auditorium: the two parts of the theater, whose division could not have been previously overcome by anything but a symbolic act, were now drawn together by sympathetic means, for the spectators in the stalls found themselves drawn into the magical sphere of the stage. Confused by the existence of a mirror world in which their very attitudes recurred, they discovered that the barriers that had still separated them from the stage had been swept away. No less than the actors they had become part of the play, closing the circle of human figurines assembled to honor the goddess of fame.

We do not claim, of course, that what may be called "the aesthetic mutation of the spectator" occurred entirely without precedent, for it is clear enough that it had been prepared by certain experiments in ecclesiastic art. It had occurred to painters in the north of Italy, such as Vincenzo Campi, to place the apostles who remained on earth in some kind of architectural constraint, into niches or columnar interstices, while Christ or the Virgin Mary surged freely into the clouds.<sup>88</sup>

86. For instance in the tombs of Urban VIII (R. Wittkower, *Gian Lorenzo Bernini*, London, 1955, pl. 45) and of Alexander VII (pl. 118), the *Cathedra Petri* (pl. 89) and the *St. Theresa* (pl. 67).

87. *ibid.*, fig. 58.

88. Frescoes in S. Paolo in Milan dated 1588 (see P. Mezzanotte and G. Bascapé, *Milano nell'arte e nella storia*, Milan,

1948, pp. 530 and 544). Campi was anticipated in such painted decorations as Gaudenzio Ferrari's *Paradise* in S. Maria dei Miracoli in Saronno (C. Ricci, *Die Malerei des 16. Jahrhunderts in Oberitalien*, Leipzig, 1929, pl. 34), where each of the twelve sides of the drum is occupied by two saints before a painted architecture. They are, however, not conceived as spectators. In the Baroque the treatment of persons present at

The impression had thus been obtained that the apostles were spectators occupying an intermediate theatrical zone, while above them the central action unrolled. But such treatment of assumption and ascension scenes was limited to ceilings and domes, so that the spectators on the ground could never identify themselves with their distant and exalted prototypes above their heads. It marked the new departure in the arts that the union of theatrical spheres took place within the horizontal zone and thus almost within reach.

It is probable, on the other hand, that the introduction of spectators on the stage was a tribute to similar theatrical customs north of the Alps, notably in France, where the habit of placing some of them there, a remainder from the practice of mystery plays, persisted into the time of Molière and into the eighteenth century.<sup>89</sup> These spectators were, however, not part of the play, with which their presence only interfered, and thus had their being outside the aesthetic sphere.

## IV

It may be permitted at this point to add a few historical odds and ends, for in the period that we have now reached the ramifications of our theme had spread beyond Italy and France and beyond the area of its greatest usefulness at the court of the absolute prince. It had become possible by now to evoke the image of the theatrical globe by just a few verses in the prologue of a play, as did Orazio Vecchi in his *Amfiparnasso* of 1597, when his need was to explain why his madrigal comedy was without a stage. He states that instead of the simulated city streets, in which the action would normally have taken place, its scene was to be set "in the great theater of the world," meaning the audience itself, for which the music had been composed.<sup>90</sup>

In England another "globe theater" had been built and named, whose productions, unlike others then much better known, were to enjoy world-wide fame.<sup>91</sup> It is clear that its name is due to its shape, for unlike corresponding structures elsewhere this one was actually an amphitheater, with its seats placed all around and with the stage jutting out into the arena between. The contemporary sightseer Johannes de Witt, who left a description of the theaters on the south bank of the Thames, called them amphitheaters,<sup>92</sup> and made a special point of comparing one of them with a typical Roman structure.

The earliest painted image of a dynastic theater comes from the hand of Antoine Caron (Fig. 2), who, together with other artists—poets, musicians, sculptors and architects—had helped to erect and decorate the semicircular structure in honor of the Duc de Joyeuse. At the center of his so-called *Massacre of the Roman Triumvirs* is a wide-open amphitheater, with its heavily accented form housing on the lowest bench the three generals responsible for the butchery. No Roman would ever have thought of directing such an action from such a place, since amphitheaters, although built to impress, were not among the accessories of power. They served as such in sixteenth century France, making it likely that Caron had drawn his example from the "royal" theater which he himself had helped to decorate. Since his picture contains a ghastly and all too obvious

the Assumption or the Miraculous Conception as spectators in a theater became commonplace; see for instance the Frescos by G. Benso (1601-1668) in the church of the Annunziata in Genoa.

89. The mediaeval version of the spectators on the stage can be studied in the well known *Martyrdom of St. Apollonia* by Jean Fouquet, which records the performance of a mystery play. The spectators sit on the same scaffolds as the angels and thus are part of the dramatic event, as they must be, since the destiny of every Christian soul is involved in the drama. About spectators on the stage of the Hôtel de Bourgogne, Paris, in the early seventeenth century, see Ch. Niemeyer, "The Hôtel de Bourgogne, France's First Popular Playhouse," *Theater Annual*, 1947, p. 72, with reconstruction of the playhouse in fig. 3, p. 75; also S. d'Amico, *Storia del teatro*

*dramatico, sine loco*, III, 1950, p. 196. On the persistence until 1748 of the habit of placing spectators on the French stage see A. Jullien, *Les spectateurs sur le théâtre*, Paris, 1875. I omit discussion of the moot question whether there were spectators behind the playing area in the Elizabethan theater.

90. Prologue spoken by Lelio: "E la città dove si rappresenta quest'opera è il gran teatro del mondo, perch' ognun desia d'udirlo; ma voi sappiat' intanto che questo di cui parlo spettacolo si mira colla mente."

91. The most recent and comprehensive treatment of the problem of Shakespeare's theater is that by C. W. Hodges, *The Globe Theater Restored, a Study of the Elizabethan Theater*, New York, 1954.

92. "Amphitheatra Londini sunt 4 visendae pulchritudinis."



reference to contemporary religious wars, it may remind us of the enormous gulf which separated the pretensions of the late Valois kings from political and spiritual realities.

Finally a Flemish amphitheater calls for mention here, part of the "Public Congratulations" in Antwerp on occasion of the entry of archduke Ernest in 1594.<sup>93</sup> There exists a detailed and for once an illustrated record of this feast, showing the various arches and tableaux which transformed the work-a-day aspect of the town into one of a somewhat pedantic gaiety. Among the temporary structures at various corners and city squares was a so-called *theatrum pacis* (Fig. 4), a half-amphitheater of the heaviest Roman type, with inner seats accommodating an extremely formal gathering of young women in allegorical disguise. A first impression that they are angels, since they sit as neatly and passively side by side as the inhabitants of Paradise, is dispelled as soon as one sees that many hold shields in hand complete with coats of arms. They are, in fact, impersonations of the blessed state of civic happiness, of the virtues, arts, and industries which benefit a commonwealth, and of the countries under the Hapsburg crown that were to profit from their gifts: the provinces of Spain, the empire overseas, and the parts of Germany and Belgium. Their presence is proof that the Florentine example known in Antwerp at least since 1549 had borne fruit.<sup>94</sup> But while the Tuscan decorators of coronation amphitheaters displayed their dynastic wares in porticoes with consistently perpendicular walls, their Flemish colleagues preferred to express their protestations of loyalty within a framework of a real amphitheater. They were the first, so far as we know, to put allegorical figures on the seats, and their example, spread abroad by a publication of remarkable luxury, may thus have influenced Buontalenti's venture made five years later.

When another such theater was erected in Antwerp in 1602, for the entry of archduke Albert and his wife, the arrangement was already changed.<sup>95</sup> The Colosseum had become an unrelated outer shell, and the rows of damsels on the seats were transformed into inhabitants of an animated cone, which turned and thus gave to each human figurine, even if seated in the rear, a chance to be seen. It would seem that the artist was so concerned with the mechanical aspect of his task that he reversed the shape of the heavens in order to show its movement.<sup>96</sup>

## V

Returning to Italy where the main development of our theme took place, we note that no less an artist than Bernini took a hand in shaping its further destiny. This is a fact of prime importance for the history of art, for his work shows that the performance for Maria de' Medici (or one very much like it) was well known to, and had considerable influence upon, the leader of the Roman High Baroque. His own performance took place in 1637, at a time when his sculpture had not begun as yet to show the full impact of illusionistic tricks.<sup>97</sup> It may thus be regarded as an intermediate step between Buontalenti's theatrical work and the full flowering of Bernini's art.

In Rome there was no secular court to please, no princely claim to exalt. It was thus possible

93. Anon., *Descriptio publicae gratulationis spectaculorum et ludorum in adventu Seren. Principis Ernesti Archiducis Austriae . . . Belgicis provinciis a Regia Maiestate Cathol. praefecti*, 1594. The book contains beside the print here reproduced another showing the amphitheater more from the side, so that the heavy architectural forms of the Colosseum become very visible.

94. See note 78 above.

95. J. Bochijs, *Historica narratio projectionis et inaugurationis Serenissimorum Belgii Principum Alberti et Isabellae Austriae Archiducum . . .*, Antwerp, 1602. This "theater" differed from its predecessor in Antwerp in that the allegorical figures were divided into symbols of peace and prosperity and those of the opposite qualities such as Ira, Discordia, and Hostilitas. The two groups sat on opposite sides of the cone

and were brought into evidence by its gyration.

96. The idea of a "theater" that turns may have been influenced by a report by Pliny *Hist. nat.* 1. 36, 15, that the first genuine amphitheater had come into being as a result of the interlocking of two mobile wooden half-amphitheaters, which could be swung around with all their spectators in them. This theater had been built by a certain Curio in the last years of the Roman republic and had served as an example for the first full amphitheater built by Julius Caesar a short time afterward.

97. As in the Raimondi Chapel, in San Pietro in Montorio, probably 1639-1648 (R. Wittkower, *op.cit.*, fig. 55), the *St. Teresa*, 1645-1652, the *Constantine*, 1654-1670 (pl. 106) and the *Blessed Lodovica Albertoni* (pl. 116).

to divest the theater of the stage of its heavenly and dynastic charge and to interpret it playfully as the realization of a mirror world. There was also no need to connect the structure with music and its celestial overtones, it being easier, in fact, to parody the conceptions of the past within the framework of a comedy.<sup>97a</sup> Thus Bernini did not retain much more of the Florentine precedent than the habit of inserting the amphitheater on the stage at the beginning or at the end of the play.

We possess a detailed description of this scenic prank in a letter by the eye-witness Massimiliano Montecuculi to the Duke of Modena, a better and more reliable account, on the whole, than Chantelou's much later one of Bernini's own somewhat faded reminiscences. "When the curtain had fallen, one saw on the stage a flock of people partly real and partly only feigned, who had been so well distributed that they seemed almost to represent those on the other side, who had come in great number to see the comedy."<sup>98</sup> Chantelou supplemented this account by asserting that the crowd on the stage was seated in a "second auditorium" and that there were, in fact, "two theaters."<sup>99</sup> And now Bernini proceeded to strengthen the sense of illusion by inserting two middlemen, themselves spectators of a kind, who saw what the audience beheld, and proclaimed the reality of the two rival theaters. "Upon the scene there were two braggarts [played, so Chantelou asserts, by Bernini himself and his brother] who pretended to draw, paper and pencil in hand, one with his face toward the real, the other toward the fictitious audience."<sup>100</sup> After working in silence for some time, they fell into conversation and came to realize that the group that each of them beheld was deemed illusory by the other; it being their unavowed intent to impair the spectator's awareness of himself and to involve him in a presumably delightful confusion of realities. Then, the time having come for making the best of this theatrical paradox, the two braggarts decided "that they would pull a curtain across the scene and that each would arrange a performance for his own audience alone,"<sup>101</sup> of which one, the above-mentioned comedy, was in fact submitted to the real spectators. But Chantelou narrates that "it was interrupted at times by the laughter of those on the other side, as if something very pleasant had been seen and heard"<sup>102</sup> and that, with the second theater out of sight, the sense of reality was now seemingly unimpeachable. At the end the two braggarts reappeared and asked each other how they had fared, whereupon the impresario of the fictitious stage asserted—and thereby rendered the confusion complete—that he had never shown anything more than the audience itself preparing to leave "with their carriages and horses and accompanied by a great number of lights and torches,"<sup>103</sup> a scene which, according to Chantelou, was in fact exhibited on the stage in the midst of flats or periaacts representing the Piazza di San Pietro.<sup>104</sup>

Once it had become possible to play with a theme in this way, it is likely that it had passed its prime, and indeed it would seem justified to treat the history that we still have to relate as an aftermath. The new theatrical world in Italy,<sup>105</sup> marked by the emergence of the Venetian opera house, was not apt to favor a theme that had drawn its life from its relation to the court. The opening of the auditorium to all who had the means to pay was bound to result in its mental

97a. It is characteristic of the situation that the first experiments with comic opera should have been made in Rome.

98. Published by S. Fraschetti, *Il Bernini*, Milan, 1900, p. 262: "Al cader dunque della tela si vide dalla parte di dentro cioè di là della scena un popolo parte vero parte finto che tutto insieme era così ben concertato che rappresentava quasi il medesimo che veramente era dalla parte di quà in multo numero per veder la commedia."

99. "Il fit voir un auditorium au delà du théâtre comme s'il y eût deux representations; et raconté la contestation qu'il feignait être entre son frère et lui de ce qu'il y avait deux théâtres au lieu d'un. . ." (H. Leclerc, *op.cit.*, p. 169.)

100. "Su la scena erano due coviegli che con una carta per uno, ed un lapis in mano, mostravano di stare disegnando, ed uno guardava verso il popolo vero et l'altro verso il finto."

101. "Poi concluderono che tirata una tela divisoria al longo

della scena recitassero ciascheduno al suo popolo."

102. "Pendant que lui représentait sa commédie, l'on entendait des feints éclats de rire que faisaient ceux de l'autre côté, comme s'ils eussent vue et entendu quelque chose de fort plaisant."

103. "Fugli risposto dal compagno che non s'era servito di altra prospettiva ne di altra curiosità che di quella che la varia moltitudine di quelli che uscirono dalla stanza insieme con la eguale quantità delle carrozze e de' cavalli accompagnati da un infinito numero di lumi e di torcie. . ."

104. "L'on vit un grand clair de lune, la representation de la place de devant Saint Pierre, une quantité de cavaliers, les uns a cheval, les autres en carosse et à pied. . ."

105. About this and the following remarks see the excellent account of the architectural development of the seventeenth century theater in H. Leclerc, *op.cit.*

separation from the stage, even though the latter tried to bridge the gulf by the adoption of more and more lavish display. Another division, this time architectural, arose with the insertion of the proscenium, whose broad expanse, set at the point of juncture between auditorium and stage, was to prevent any true completion of the theater in the round. Finally the amphitheater itself, whose Roman pedigree had long enabled it to withstand all change, began to yield to those forms from contemporary tournament courts which we know today as the tiers of boxes and balconies, with the result that henceforth the artists responsible for the scene design had to ask themselves in each case whether their amphitheater on the stage was to take its cue from its classical prototype, or rather from the newfangled, many-storied structure along the walls.

Considering all this it is astonishing how much of the traditional theater of the heavens survived into and throughout the period of Venetian opera—survived although, one must add, the libretti of the time were usually historical, not mythological, and thus compelled the poets to adjust themselves to conditions foreign to the requirements of their theme. They managed in several instances by returning to the classical notion of the amphitheater as a place of battles and games, and combining it through various symbolic twists with its heavenly significance, such a synthesis of realism and emblematic intent being always a hallmark of the Baroque.

As one scans some of the numerous, but usually worthless libretti of the seventeenth century, it becomes manifest that at that time none of the old connotations of the amphitheater had been lost. They were places of festive exuberance suited for military triumph and acclaim;<sup>106</sup> heroes and emperors sat enthroned in them and there accepted the encomia of their subordinates;<sup>107</sup> queens were installed by their royal spouses, in continuation of Florentine coronation practices.<sup>108</sup> To these dynastic aspects the celestial ones were conjoined. Thus the hero on his semicircular throne was addressed as one whose merit entitled him to entry into heaven, since it is of Olympian magnitude.<sup>109</sup> Then there were the scenes, some of them staggeringly absurd, of heaven coming down and even infiltrating its bulbous clouds into the straight walls and piers of the amphitheater; of Apollo descending into a "palace of the sun" sheltered within amphitheatrical arms;<sup>110</sup> of the gods on high supervising sham battles in honor of a royal wedding feast;<sup>111</sup> of gladiators coming upon the scene from a semicircle of clouds that parallels the amphitheater with its imperial thrones;<sup>112</sup> and finally, most complete of all, of the gods and the allegory of fame weaving a commentary of living forms around the architecture on the stage.<sup>113</sup> In the last case Attila sits

106. For instance *La Costanza di Rosmonda*, Venice, 1659, text by A. Aureli, music by J. B. Rovettino, 2nd act, 22nd scene: "Vestigi di antico anfiteatro in Micene con apparecchio di publici spettacoli preparati dal popolo in onore di Pelope per allegrezza della vittoria ottenuta." Or *Scipione Africano*, text by N. Minato, music by P. F. Cavalli, 1st act, 1st scene: "Anfiteatro, Scipione assiso in loco eminente. Catone, capitani e soldati." The first chorus is

"Viva, viva Scipione, e viva, viva  
Vinse l'Fato Latino e esser volle  
De Romani trionfi  
Partiale destino."

107. *Claudio Cesare*, Venice, 1672, text by A. Aureli, music by Boretti, 3rd act, 1st scene: Claudio, Mithradate and Nero enthroned in an amphitheater.

108. *La Forza della Virtù*, Venice, 1693, text by D. David, music by A. Perti, last act, last scene: "Anfiteatro." *Massimo Puppieno*, Venice, 1685, text by A. Aureli, music by C. Pallavicino, 1st act, 1st scene: "Anfiteatro in Laurento illuminato in tempo di notte dove al lume di molte faci deve seguire festoso torneo preparato dal campo guerriero di Puppieno in onore delle sue nozze con Claudia, e della sua nuova elezione all'impero di Roma."

109. *I due tiranni al Soglio*, Venice, 1679, text by M. Noris, music by A. Sartorio, 1st act, 1st scene: "Anfiteatro con scalinata altissima e trono, Valentiniano, Eugenio, Arbogasto di dentro." Decio approaches the throne and says to Valentiniano: "Un

ciel conviensi a tanta luce." Arbogasto chimes in: "Deità si vaga merita un Olimpo."

110. *Il Nicomede di Bittinia*, Venice, 1677, text by M. Giovanni, music by C. Grossi, 2nd act, 26th scene: "Anfiteatro con tenda calata." 27th scene: "Sparisce la tenda e si vede una scena in scena che rappresenta la reggia del sole tutta a raggi d'oro."

111. *Pirro e Demetrio*, Venice, 1690, text by A. Morselli, music by F. Tosi, 3rd act, last scene: "Anfiteatro, ove fra folto numero di spettatori compariscono quattro deità in machina, quali introducono quattro squadre di cavalieri, che fanno una leggiadra festa in figura di battaglia per solennizzare le nozze di Pirro e Demetrio."

112. *I due Cesari*, Venice, 1683, text by G. C. Corradi, music by G. L. Legrenzi, 1st act, 14th scene: "Anfiteatro con seggio reale. Basciano [proper name] in lontananza sopra maestoso carro, gran machina in alto, in cui s'assiedono i gladiatori per celebrare i giuochi secondo il consueto di quel giorno, nel moto della quale si va formando un bellissimo semicercolo in aria rappresentante il cielo di Marte." After some parleying the gladiators descend from the clouds and deliver a mock battle.

113. *Attila*, Venice, 1672, text by M. Noris, music by P. A. Zani, 3d act, 1st scene: "Reggia anfiteatro. In Aria Apollo sopra il vivo pegaso attornato da varie deitadi sopra nubi. In terra Fama con la tromba sopra un globo; dirimpetto Amore che preme un Marte armato." A considerably earlier but Christian example of a similar arrangement is to be found in



enthroned with his wife Irene. He addresses to her one of those monstrously grandiloquent compliments with which contemporaries seem to have been able to bear: "A throne of stars would be worthy of thy foot, my beautiful one; even now thou holdest heaven in thine eye, portentous, shining and interspersed with lightning,"<sup>114</sup> verses which may render us aware that the identity of the royal and the architectural had begun to dissolve and that now it was held only precariously at the point of intersection between a theatrical situation and a metaphor.

In many of these operas the amphitheater was reserved for the grandest scene, either at the beginning or at the end, preceding or terminating the luxuriant complexities of the plot. It had thus an important share in the distribution of musical emphasis, for a chorus could be installed on its steps, whose deeper sonorities were a counterweight against the interminable succession of recitatives and arias. The amphitheater thus offered an opportunity for the employment of mass effects and for the sounding of trumpets and kettledrums.<sup>115</sup> It must be remembered, on the other hand, that the customs of Venetian opera prevented the introduction of choral counterpoint, and that thus the chance was lost of presenting the interplay of voices in a pagan paradise.

Almost nothing is known about the appearance of these operatic amphitheatres, for we possess no pertinent drawings of earlier date than the last decades of the seventeenth century. These, however, puzzle more than they enlighten, for most of them are unattached and unlabeled, offering no clues to the performance of which they are the last and tantalizing visual residue. It is not easy, therefore, to know what to make of the astounding variety of amphitheatres on the stage which suddenly confront us at the beginning of the eighteenth century: semicircular colonnades,<sup>116</sup> ambulatories with a view into an arena,<sup>117</sup> round temples,<sup>118</sup> intimate garden theaters with fountains and silent hedges,<sup>119</sup> and finally vast semicircular halls with stairs and balconies leading up to royal apartments (Fig. 5). Only a fraction of these could have been meant to render amphitheatres of heavens, while the rest are adaptations of the type to alien scenic requirements.<sup>120</sup> The reader will not overlook what this purports: after a long subservience to iconographic restraints the amphitheater of the stage had begun to emancipate itself as an architectural type, and thus was enabled to enjoy a short-lived fling of freedom, before a change of taste during the Neoclassical period destroyed this last—purely formal—basis of its continuance. To render matters more difficult, the amphitheatres of the heavens in their turn seem to have imbibed influences from other quarters, preventing us from picking them out from among a host of similar structures.

There is only one drawing, to this writer's knowledge, that can be identified with any certainty as an operatic theater of heaven: a design in the Academy in Vienna (Fig. 6), showing in the center of its semicircle of columns three chairs high upon a podium, that are fairly crying out

the French *ballet de cour*, *L'Aventure de Tancrède dans la forêt enchantée*, danced on February 12, 1619 (P. Lacroix, *Ballets et mascarades de cour de Henry III à Louis XIV* [1581-1662] *recueillies et publiées d'après les éditions originales*, Geneva, 1868, II, p. 186). The decoration was an illustration of Tasso's text. The king himself seems to have played the victorious Godefroy de Bouillon; he seated himself in the amphitheater together with the other Christian heroes, while the angels in heaven sang. Another amphitheater based upon the Tasso text occurs in *Gli avvenimenti d'Erminia e Clorinda*, Venice, 1693, text by G. C. Corradi, music by C. F. Pollaroli.

114. "Degno è un trono di stelle  
Bella, al tuo piè; già che di lampi sparso  
Con lucido portento  
Chiudi ne' tuoi begl'occhi il firmamento."

115. Masses of singers are demanded in the amphitheater scenes of *La costanza di Rosmonda*, *I due tiranni al Soglio*, *Scipione Africano*, to mention just a few. Trumpets are called for in the text of *I due tiranni al Soglio*, both trumpets and kettledrums in *Numa Pompilio*, Venice, 1674 (text by M.

Noris, music by J. M. Pagliardi), where, however, the amphitheater is the background for an incantation scene.

116. For instance B. Gagliardi's (1707-1794) *anfiteatro* for the performance of *La Clemenza di Tito* in Milan, 1759 (C. Ricci, *Scenografia italiana*, Milan, 1930, fig. 101).

117. Giuseppe Galli Bibiena, an amphitheater used as a cemetery (J. Scholz, *Baroque and Romantic Stage Design*, New York, 1950, pl. 32).

118. A. Pozzo, *Perspectiva pictorum et architectorum*, Rome, 1700, II, pl. 44, or F. Fontanesi (1751-1795) in V. Mariani, *Scenografia italiana*, Florence, 1930, pl. 84.

119. One by Ferdinando Galli Bibiena (Munich Graphische Sammlung, Bibiena Volume 2, 99r), and one by J. Platzer (Vienna, Akademie der schönen Künste, no. 5898).

120. For a seventeenth century adaptation of the theater on the stage see Burnacini's decoration for *La monarchia latina, trinfante*, 1678, reproduced in Dagobert Frey's *Kunstwissenschaftliche Grundfragen*, Vienna, 1946, pl. XIX. This book contains the most recent and most competent discussion of the theater on the stage in the Baroque period.

for their royal sitters. Without steps and extension in depth, a mere shell in the midst of a hidden garden scenery, this building could hardly have been used as anything but a background for an accolade. The drawing is also significant in that its heavy architecture with its giant order, unbroken architrave, and balusters is in the style of the High Baroque, whereas the penmanship betrays a Bibiena hand.<sup>121</sup> It may well be a copy of the eighteenth century after an original of the seventeenth, and thus the one remaining testimony for the appearance of the theater of heaven during the Venetian period of opera. None of the other existing scene designs can be pinned down to a dynastic or celestial significance. The well-known amphitheater, for instance, that accompanies the Padre Pozzo's textbook on perspective (Fig. 7), is no more than an illustration of a problem in linear construction and thus without its former context on the Jesuit stage. If an interpretation be attempted, it would seem that its severely classical features, meticulously copied after the Colosseum, were to revive a Roman scene, perhaps in connection with the suffering of Christian martyrs.

In Ferdinando Galli Bibiena's art, then, the visual riches potentially contained in our subject are spread before us for the first time. There are stage theaters with and without steps,<sup>122</sup> one that is an empty colonnade,<sup>123</sup> and several others that are the center and terminus of whole flights of palace rooms;<sup>124</sup> amphitheatres with one or two floors;<sup>125</sup> semicircular ones and others that approach the round;<sup>126</sup> there is one that embraces a tabernacle in the center,<sup>127</sup> and another dominated by an undulating line of projecting and receding balconies within niches (Fig. 9),<sup>128</sup> very much like the earlier large scale building that had graced a tournament held in Modena in 1660.<sup>129</sup> The maximum of splendor was reached in the generation after Ferdinando Galli Bibiena, shortly before the amphitheater disappeared from the repertory of theatrical scenery. Its proportions grew vast, and a new hierarchy of forms was established to contain a mounting accumulation of parts, of staircases straight and interwoven, galleries suspended at breathtaking levels, crowning arches topped by overhanging balconies, and sometimes in the distance a second semicircle echoing and enclosing the first (Fig. 8). We publish among the drawings of this generation one by an unknown Italian designer of the mid-century (Fig. 5), lavish with gaiety and pomp, and distinguished by the traditional presence of spectators on the stage;<sup>130</sup> and another, more formal and ambitious, a profuse, fantastic, and congested rendition of its theme, from the pen of Ferdinando's son Giuseppe (Fig. 10).

When these late drawings were made, the idea of the theater of heaven had lost its hold. In the poetic works of Metastasio, who dominated the operatic world in the middle of the eighteenth century, the amphitheater as a scene of royal triumph occurs only once, and that in an early work written in 1727.<sup>131</sup> Later, in his *Clemenza di Tito*,<sup>132</sup> he reverted to the archeological past and

121. This fact becomes entirely apparent only before the original. The drawing belongs to a large collection in the Academy of which a considerable number is done by the same hand as the specimen under discussion. It would be difficult to tell which Bibiena is responsible.

122. All the drawings are in Ferdinando's sketchbook in the Graphische Sammlung in Munich. With steps, Bibiena, Vol. 2, fol. 40r, and Vol. 3, fol. 11v; without, Vol. 3, fol. 123r.

123. Vol. 3, fol. 123r.

124. Vol. 2, fol. 99v, and Vol. 3, fol. 22r.

125. With one floor, Vol. 2, fol. 40r and Vol. 3, fol. 123r and fol. 11v. With two floors, Vol. 2, fol. 99v and Vol. 3, fol. 22r.

126. Approaching the round, Vol. 2, fol. 40r.

127. Vol. 2, fol. 99r.

128. Vol. 2, fol. 11r.

129. *Il trionfo della fede*, Modena, 1660, published by H. Tintelnott in *Barocktheater und barocke Kunst*, Berlin, 1939, pl. 104. The apparently enormous proportions of some of the Bibiena theaters on the stage were also anticipated by tourna-

ment theaters of this type.

130. The latest example of this type known to me is a drawing by J. Platzer in the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, No. 8368, in the early Neoclassic style. Since in this drawing as well as in the one here reproduced there is a statue of a ruler in the center, it is likely that both are belated examples of dynastic theaters. Other examples of amphitheater decorations from the second part of the eighteenth century are to be found in the sketchbook of Hoetzendorf von Hohenberg in the Theater Museum in Vienna, some of them mere reproductions of the Colosseum, another (fol. 40) still indebted to the large scale compositions of the Bibienas, which are now handled in a more sober style.

131. *Semiramide*, written for the carnival in Rome. 3rd act, 9th scene: Semiramis is acclaimed, as she sits on her throne in an amphitheater. Then clouds cover the scene and the "Reggia di Giove" with all the gods becomes visible.

132. 3rd act, 12th scene: "Luogo magnifico che introduce a vasto anfiteatro di cui per diversi archi scopresi la parte interna. Si vedranno già nell'arena i complici della congiura condannati alle fiere." Amphitheatres without symbolic intent occur oc-

made of the Roman building what it had been before an ambitious interpretation had raised it up to heavens: a scene of mass passion and cruelty. If there were other amphitheatres on Metastasio's stage—and the Bibienas, his colleagues in Vienna, may very well have built some for him—then they were meant to satisfy such general stage directions as “royal hall” or “place of magnificence.”

## BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

casionally even in the seventeenth century, for instance *Il pomodoro*, Vienna, 1668, text by F. Sbarra, music by A. Cesti (3rd act, 12th scene), with illustration after Burnacini, or *Lisimaco riamato di Alessandro*, Venice, 1682, text by A. Aureli, music by G. Legrenzi, 3rd act, last scene, where the amphitheater serves as a background for a battle with a lion.





# THE DRAWINGS OF STRADANUS (JAN VAN DER STRAETEN) IN THE COOPER UNION MUSEUM FOR THE ARTS OF DECORATION, NEW YORK

MICHEL N. BENISOVICH

IT is now over fifty years ago, in 1901 to be exact, that the first part of the collection of Giovanni Piancastelli, Director of the Borghese Gallery, entered the Museum for the Arts of Decoration of the Cooper Union in New York, becoming the foundation of its collection of drawings. It was a massive purchase of about 3,500 drawings, including a group by Stradanus. Thirteen years later, the rest of this Roman collection, amounting to some 8,000 pieces, passed into the hands of Mrs. E. D. Brandegee of Boston, who gave her group to the Cooper Union Museum in 1938. It is thus that the greater part of the Piancastelli Collection was reunited and now forms more than half of Cooper Union's collection of 20,000 drawings.<sup>1</sup> Thus Cooper Union should be added to the list of nine public collections containing drawings by Stradanus given by H. M. Schwartz.<sup>2</sup>

Piancastelli may have obtained an entire lot coming from the studio of Stradanus, Jan van der Straeten, "Belga Brugensis," for there are now at the Museum no fewer than 312 of this artist's drawings: 160 on the front of the sheets, 152 on the reverse.<sup>3</sup>

These are sketches quickly traced in a cursive script by a pen which tears and burns the paper; studies massed together on small sheets, often grouped four to each side, using every bit of space. On the reverse, written fairly legibly in phonetic Italian, often interspersed with Flemish words, there are some laundry lists, diary entries, notes, drafts of contracts with clients. Notes intended for engravers abroad are also fairly numerous. The sketches were intended to be further developed into more finished drawings, by Stradanus or his workshop, drawings such as those at Windsor Castle or those formerly in the W. A. Baillie Grohman Collection, complete with indications of highlights for the use of engravers. It is for this latter type of drawing, intended for engravers in Munich or Antwerp, that Stradanus has been known up to now. The sketches like those at Cooper Union are done for the most part in reverse, to come out right as engravings. The sketches remained in Stradanus' studio, unknown to the outside world.

Since they were destined to be reproduced by engraving, we can generally tell the date *post quam* they must have been executed, for Baldinucci (*Notizie . . .*, ed. 1845-47, II, pp. 591-96), in his biography of Stradanus, says that it was upon his return from Naples where he went in 1575, that the artist "si diede a far disegni ed invenzioni per l'intaglio." On the other hand, nothing need have kept Stradanus from giving the engravers sketches which had long been lying dormant in his portfolios.

Stradanus' autograph annotations contain explanations of the subjects of the *Venationes* or Hunts, with indications of their literary sources: for instance, Homer, for the *Pygmies Attacking the Cranes*; Herodotus, for the *Hunt of the King of the Persians*; and especially Pliny the Elder, whose *Historia Naturalis* came out in translation in Holland in 1601. There is a detailed caption

1. Calvin Hathaway, "An Introduction to the Collection of Drawings," in *Chronicle of the Museum*, II, No. 4, June 1952.

2. Thieme-Becker, *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon*, xxxii. It may be mentioned that the Museum of the School of Design,

Providence, R.I., has recently acquired a drawing, *Falconry*, by Stradanus.

3. We owe these figures to the courtesy of Mr. E. Maurice Bloch, former Keeper of Drawings and Prints at the Cooper Union Museum.

for the four *Chariots* (sketches for tapestries?). One manuscript note refers to the opening of a barrel of wine, with the date of this domestic event; others, to the order given by a certain "Baccio" for twelve hunting subjects (April 27, 1587), or to the payment of 60 "testoni di Roma" (dated April 2, 1597), or the promise to deliver to Sonigi Allemani (Aloysio Alamannio, of Dante's dedication?) 26 drawings of dance subjects "secondo che di lui sarà ordinati della grandezza et qualità di quelli."

A note of 1594 says: "17 sett. mandai il primo disegno di Vergine al Sadler (Raphael Sadeler—M.B.), 8 ottobre: 2 disegni di Apollo al S.;—12 ott. la Titola, la Nobilità al S.;—19 ott. Diana;—21 gen. 1595 Pallas;—2 di marzo mandò al Sadeler a poner del vello a S. Apollinare." Finally, on the back of the drawing of *Himeneus* we read: "Sadler eccelente copersnider in figure in Monaco." The latter drawing, with *Pallas* and *Diana*, was destined for the *Schema seu Speculum Principum*, published in 1597 where *Diana* stood for *Venatio* and *Himeneus* for *Nuptiae*.

These manuscript indications sometimes refer to the subject of the drawing: the *Woman of the Apocalypse*, for instance, "Una femma vestita di sole." These often abundant explanatory notes were necessary because of the distance separating Stradanus from his engravers, and from the author of the captions in Latin verse, A. C. Kilianus Dufflaeus, cousin of P. Galle (see captions of the *Venationes*).

The subjects of most of the Cooper Union Museum sketches refer to the *Venationes, Pugnae bestiariorum et mutuae Bestiarum*. They were engraved by A. and J. Collaert, Ph. Galle excudit, without date.<sup>4</sup> There is another series of scenes of the hunt dedicated to Cosimo Medici, engraved by J. Collaert alone, dated 1578.

Some of these engraved subjects were taken from tapestries after Stradanus at Poggio a Caiano, tapestries which adorned 20 rooms, according to Baldinucci, who says there were 132 cartoons which have since disappeared.<sup>5</sup>

The subjects of the scenes of the hunt at Cooper Union include, among many others, studies of pearl fishing, troglodytes hunting elephants (2 versions), a crocodile hunt, a panther hunt, an *orca* (killer whale) in the port of Ostia, pygmies hunting goats and cranes, a tiger escaped from his cage ("un autore greco racconta" says the manuscript note), women pursuing Pan, and finally the archer and the stag, etc.

The print of the last subject is reproduced in Alice W. Frothingham's article, "Talavera Pottery Decorations Based on Designs by Stradanus" (*Hispanic Notes*, New York, March 1943). The author of this article lists no less than six subjects by Stradanus reproduced by the potters of Talavera in Spain from prints. Sketches for them are at the Cooper Union Museum: partridge, bear and rabbit hunts. Among the subjects used on Spanish pottery were also a *Falconry* and *Wolf Hunt* from the Louvre drawings.

Another series of sketches admirably represented at Cooper Union is that made for the *Nova Reperta*, printed in 9 sheets with frontispiece (Th. Galle sculpsit, Philippe Galle excudit) Fig. 1. Only the sketch for America is missing from the Cooper Union collection. The final drawing of this subject in reverse for the engraver, bearing indications concerning Amerigo Vespucci, "Florentinus," 1497, is also in the United States, in the collection of James Hazen Hyde (see ill. in *Masterpieces of Drawings*, Diamond Jubilee Exhibition 1950-51, Philadelphia Museum of Art).

The comprehensive scope of this set of *Nova Reperta* illustrates the "indiscriminating curiosity,

4. It was in the Print Room of the Metropolitan Museum of New York that we were able to make all the comparisons and examinations required by this study. In 1953 the Museum acquired the prints, including many by Stradanus, from the collection of the Princes of Liechtenstein at the Castle of Vaduz.

5. The influence of the *Venationes* and other series by Stradanus extended, outside pottery and azulejos, to the field of tapestry. Abroad, young Willem Tons of Brussels visited Italy and could have known Stradanus. We find proof of this

in the tapestry of the *Battle between Griffons and Panthers* made by Tons (father or son) for the King of Poland, Sigismund Auguste (owned by the Polish Government, but now in Canada). The government of the Republic of Colombia in South America has recently made into a museum the house built in Tunja in 1585, whose walls are decorated with frescos which, according to Martin Soria, reproduce engravings by Stradanus (*Venationes*), Dürer (*Rhinoceros*), Leonard Thiry, and Marc Duval.

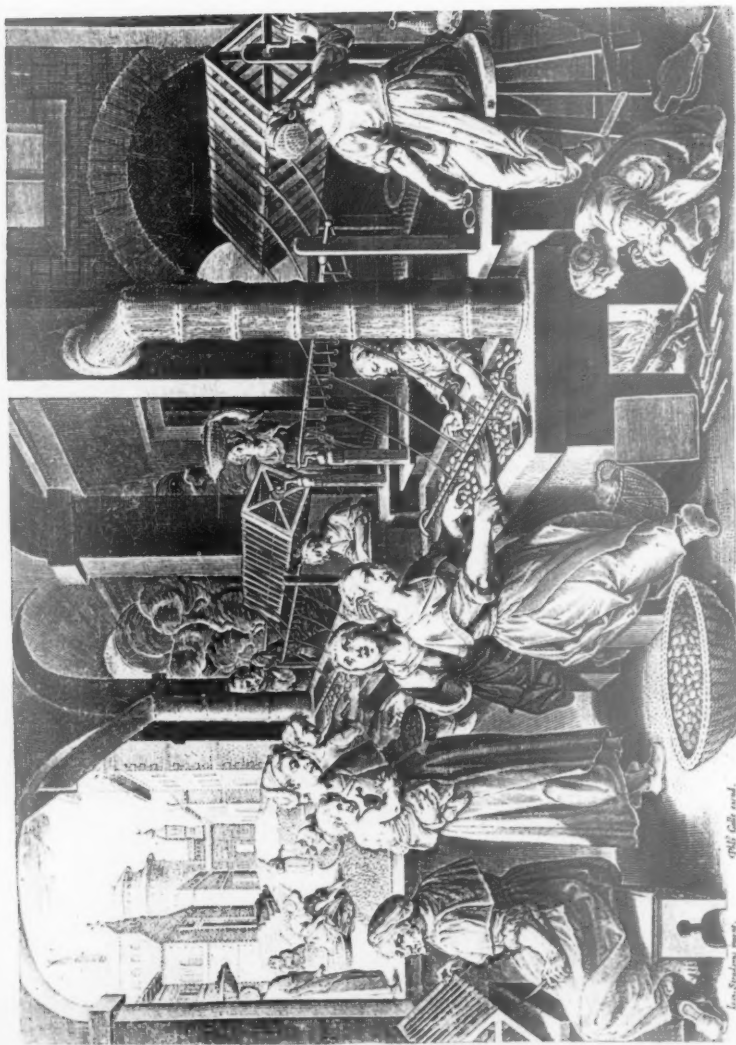




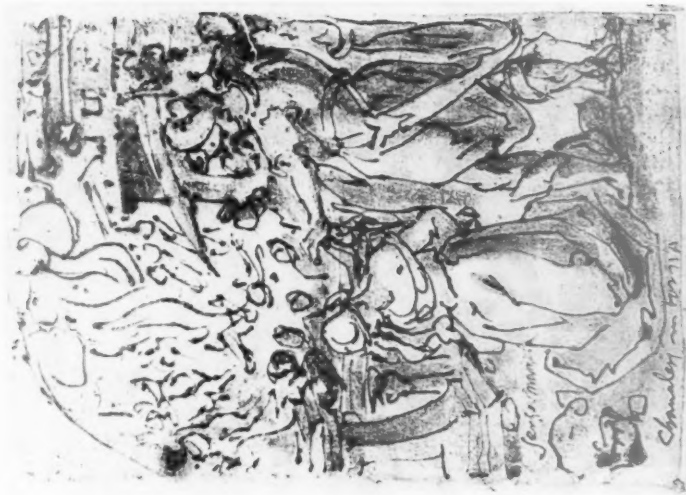
12. Jan van der Straeten, *Nova Reperta*. Engraving by Ph. Galle



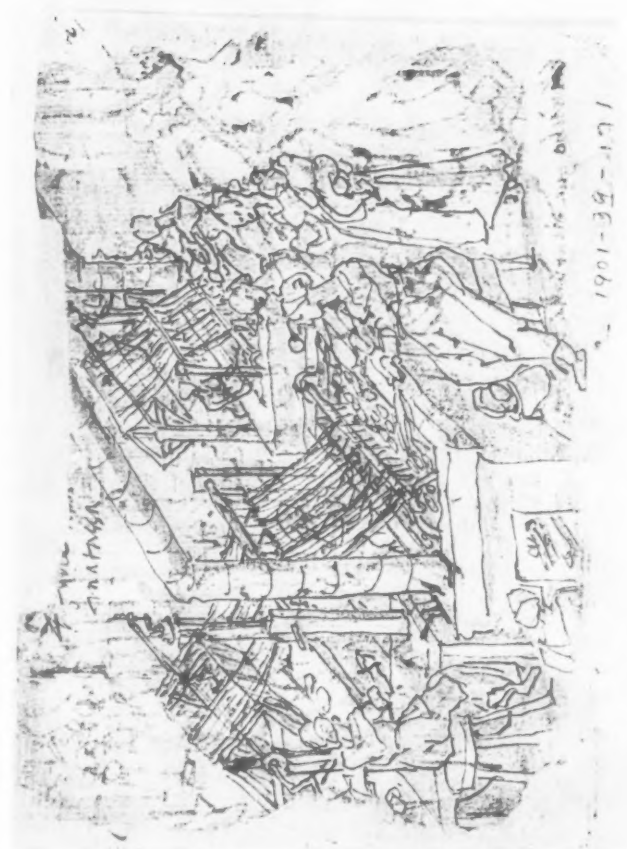
1b-e. Jan van der Straeten, *Lapis polaris*. Drawings (pen and wash): b. Ser sive sericus vermis. c. Lapis polaris. d. Horologia ferrea. e. Distillatio (Courtesy Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration)



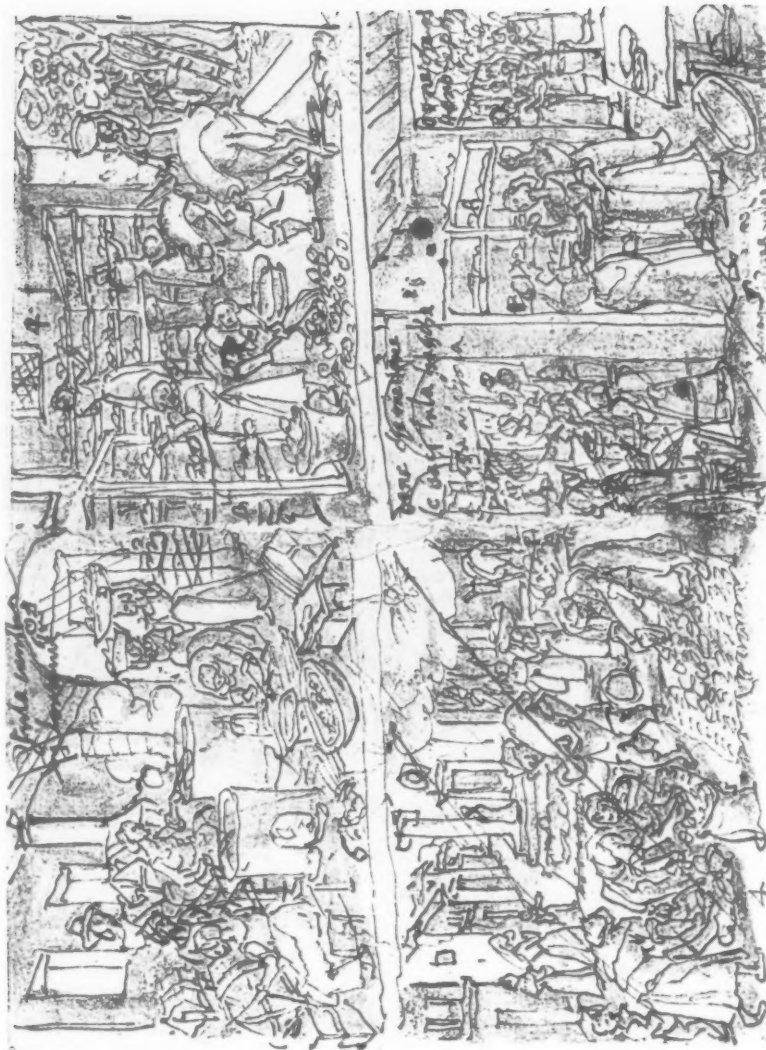
2a. Jan van der Straeten, *Vermis sericus*. Engraving by Ph. Galle



3. Jan van der Straeten, *Martyrdom of St. Agatha*  
Drawing (pencil and wash)



2b-f. Jan van der Straeten, *Vermis sericus*. Drawings (pen and wash)  
(Courtesy Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration)





at once practical and speculative, by which in the XVIth and XVIIth centuries the mind of Europe was devoured" (Geoffrey Scott, *The Architecture of Humanism*, London, 1914, p. 147). It is possible that several sketches of ships at Cooper Union Museum are part of the second series of *Nova Reperta, The Invention of the Compass*.

The silkworm industry became the subject of one of the *libri* of Stradanus, *Vermis sericus*, with a dedication to Constantia Alemannia, for which Cooper Union has seven sketches (Fig. 2) of which some appeared in the series engraved by Philippe Galle. The finished drawings of these are at Windsor Castle.<sup>6</sup>

Some of the drawings at Cooper Union were never engraved; the subjects of others will be hard to identify, for instance, some feminine nudes of a Fontainebleau type in a painter's studio. One can recognize the *Mother of the Gracchi* of the Roman History series (Th. Galle); some subjects from the Story of Ulysses, the Life of St. John the Baptist; four subjects from the Apocalypse, with Satan, four others from the Story of St. Appoline, Atalante, etc.

There are few decorative subjects: one escutcheon shaded in blue ink; another (that of the Medici) for *Passio, Mors et Resurrectio* (frontispiece with dedication to Cardinal Ferdinand de Medicis, Wierix sc.). Then there are sketches for an altar, a sideboard adorned with glassware and a kettle. Stradanus shows archaic tendencies when he draws a Gothic painted cross or a Renaissance Virgin.

It is somewhat surprising to find at Cooper Union a *Hanged Man* with the annotation "Aff. Piccolomini, 1601." This condottiere ravaged the Papal estates under Sixtus V. One also notices an *Executio Reginae*, marked "12 piedi quadro," representing the execution of Mary of Scotland in 1587 (cf. anonymous drawing at Windsor Castle, Van Puyvelde, No. 197), another contemporary event.

It is in drawings like the *Martyrdom of St. Agatha*, marked for the engraver "senza mamelle" (Fig. 3), *Judith* (4 drawings), *Salome*, or *Judas*, that Stradanus rises above his "*nordica natura*," and his inclination toward the confused grouping of objects. In his violent nocturnal scenes full of cruel fury, he foreshadows the "tenebrosi" of the next generation. Thus there is cause to revise the judgment of A. von Wuerzbach that Stradanus was "der traurigste von allen Dekadenzmanieristen," as well as previous criticism by Eugene Müntz.

It is his contemporary, Raffaele Borghini, writing in 1584, who ranks Stradanus first among *valentuomi forestieri*, when he speaks of the six *libri* being engraved by Philippe Galle in Antwerp. It is he who reveals that Stradanus "ha messo in ordine tre carte," among them the stories of St. Agatha, St. Agnes, and St. Lucy. There are at the Cooper Union Museum several drawings of the above subjects.

Dr. J. A. F. Orbaan, biographer of Stradanus, mentions in his article, "Italie en de Nederlanden" (*Feestbundel Dr. A. Bredius aangeboden*, 1915, p. 214) information concerning the artist contained in the *Carteggio* of Vasari prepared for publication by Dr. Karl Frey. However, expectations of new material were not fulfilled when *Der literarische Nachlass Giorgio Vasari's* and *Neue Briefe* appeared after Dr. Karl Frey's death, prepared for publication by his son. On the other hand, we can learn much from the Cooper Union drawings, which take us into the intimacy of Stradanus' own studio in Florence.<sup>7</sup>

#### NEW YORK CITY

6. L. van Puyvelde, *Flemish Drawings at Windsor Castle*, London, 1943, nos. 159-163. In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, there is an album of drawings by the Milanese artist Arcimboldo, some of which deal with the silkworm, but they are done in the spirit of *scherzi di fantasia*.

7. In Mexico we came across a certain Samuel Stradanus, engraver, born at Antwerp, whose name figures on the frontispieces of books published in Mexico City between 1609 and

1622.

For the *Sucesos de la Islas Filipinas* by D. Antonio de Morga, he supplied a Panorama of Luzon; for the *Sitio de Mexico*, by Dr. D. Cisneros, he engraved the portrait of the author; for the *Obediencia* by Arias Villalobos, also the portrait of the author. (Our notes concerning him will appear in one of the forthcoming volumes of Thieme-Becker.)





## BOOK REVIEWS

L. A. MAYER, *Islamic Architects and their Works*, Geneva, Albert Kundig, 1956. Pp. 183. 30 Swiss francs.

This work represents the initial section of a proposed corpus of Muslim artists, and lists over 300 architects, engineers, and master masons who worked in the period from the rise of Islam until the terminal date of A.D. 1830.

The comprehensive survey of architectural inscriptions and documentary evidence is said to "cover the Muslim world from Morocco to Baloochistan" but there is no indication of its range to the north and south of this median line. On the one hand the author excludes material from Pakistan, India, Indonesia, etc. on the ground that an archaeologist should not write about countries which he has never visited and the art of which he has never made the subject of independent research; and on the other hand his survey lists a number of monuments within the USSR, at Samarkand and in Turkestan. Had the limits of the survey been defined in more detail, the reader would know why Marw and Samarkand were included and all of Afghanistan excluded.

The body of the text presents the builders individually in an alphabetical listing, supported by exhaustive bibliographical notes. It is followed by a very useful topographical index which serves to illustrate that the bulk of the builders named were active within the approximate boundaries of present-day Turkey. Within the Preface and the Introduction the author includes his interesting findings on the role of the architect and builder in Islamic society and underlines the fact that very little is known about the status, technical training, and on-the-job responsibility of the architects. More emphasis might have been placed upon the role of the craft system in construction: the name of an *ustadh* ("master craftsman") on a building implies that he supervised the work of apprentices who learned through doing and who tended to preserve established methods and patterns. The author points out that by and large the Islamic architects did not inscribe their names on buildings, although in certain regions the inscriptions are full of the names of officials and patrons. It may be suggested that the existence of the building inscriptions depended on whether or not the construction team included a craftsman capable of both designing and executing such inscriptions: in Iran, for example, regional monuments reflect the interest of calligrapher-craftsmen in perpetuating their own names and those of their associates.

The author visualizes his corpus as a new, more fruitful, and more just approach to Islamic craftsmanship and it is perfectly true that his conscientious labors will result finally in a clearer picture of the role of the individual on the growth and development of Muslim art.

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OLEXA POWSTENKO, *The Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev*, Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S., vol. III-IV, no. 4 (10)—1, 2 (11-12), New York, 1954. Pp. 469; 200 numbered ills. \$12.50.

This is the first extensive monograph in English, or for that matter in any Western language, on one of the great architectural monuments of the Middle Ages, the cathedral of St. Sophia at Kiev. The study of St. Sophia presents peculiar difficulties. Documentary information regarding its construction (presumably in the second quarter of the eleventh century) is very meager. After suffering various depredations at the hands of both Russians and Mongols, the building fell into disrepair and became practically a ruin in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A thorough reconstruction between 1690 and 1707 completely obliterated the exterior aspect of the cathedral beneath Baroque additions. Further ruinous restorations were carried out in the nineteenth century; and, as the author informs us, the building has not fared uniformly well under the Soviets. Yet, thanks to archaeological investigations that have now been carried on intermittently for about a century but especially since 1917, the original structure can be visualized with tolerable accuracy. This is admittedly no easy matter; but it is even harder to place St. Sophia in its correct art-historical context, since, with the exception of the Tithe church, of which only the foundations are preserved, St. Sophia has no predecessors on Kievan soil. It stands, a full-grown masterpiece, on the very threshold of Russian architecture.

Mr. Powstenko's book, with text in both English and Ukrainian, attempts to give a comprehensive picture of St. Sophia: a historical outline, a description of the architecture, sculpture, mosaics and frescoes, as well as of the baroque monastery buildings, a discussion of conflicting scholarly opinions, and, finally, a chronology of the main events that have affected the cathedral. Until 1943 the author was attached to the staff of St. Sophia (a museum since 1935), and knows the building intimately. Most important, he has been able to bring out of Russia a collection of fine photographs which he has used to illustrate his work. These photographs, nearly 300 of them, certainly constitute for the Western reader the main asset of this book.

The text has its ups and downs. The historical survey is interesting, although one might have wished for a fuller discussion of the construction date, which recent Soviet scholarship places in 1037-1046 whereas Mr. Powstenko in his chronological section seems to favor 1017-1037. The descriptive sections are also not without value, if somewhat lacking in precision, and, in places, made difficult to follow by the absence of references to the illustrations. There is unfortunately a good deal of carelessness: inscriptions are not always correctly copied, some saints' names are distorted, etc. The identification of figures, such as the apostles in the Eucharist mosaic, might have benefited from a better

acquaintance with Byzantine iconography. It may also be mentioned at this point that a new investigation of the building, started in 1952, is now in progress, and has already resulted in some important findings, particularly as regards the iconographic program of the church.<sup>1</sup>

The fact, however, that is rather distressing about Mr. Powstenko's work is his pronounced nationalistic bias. With monotonous insistence he argues that St. Sophia is the product neither of Byzantine nor of Russian art, but of Ukrainian art under Byzantine influence. This applies in his mind not only to the architecture, but also to the sculpture, the frescoes, and even the mosaics. No matter where he turns, he discovers "local elements." Thus, the Virgin of the Annunciation mosaic "may reflect the local idea of feminine beauty"; the Virgin *orans* in the central apse shows "local taste in color"; the rocky background of the Annunciation fresco represents, we are told, the Dnieper hills; the Fathers of the Church in St. Michael's sanctuary "resemble local types"; the intricate fresco ornament is compared to Ukrainian Easter eggs, etc., etc. Whether St. Sophia is labeled Russian or Ukrainian is presumably a question of semantics; the significant problem is whether the overwhelmingly Byzantine character of the building is modified by other elements, either local or imported from elsewhere.

The indigenous theory is, of course, much in vogue in Russia today. Brunov, who had previously held different views, has more recently been stressing the differences between St. Sophia and contemporary Byzantine architecture, and even trying to derive the pyramidal appearance of St. Sophia from the prehistoric *kurgans* (mounds) of Russia.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Powstenko has a different approach, startling in its simplicity: St. Sophia, he argues, is Ukrainian because it is practically a carbon copy of the Tithe church, the first monument of "Ukrainian architecture." No matter if the Tithe church was built by Greek masters, as the *Hypatian Chronicle* tells us, and was, as even the Soviet archaeologist Voronin admits, the most purely Byzantine monument on Russian soil.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Powstenko does not hesitate to reconstruct the original Tithe church (i.e. before it was enlarged by Prince Jaroslav) on the model of St. Sophia, with a similar arrangement of domes and an ambulatory, for which the excavation plan certainly offers no evidence. Having thus begged the question, the author proudly points to the prototype of St. Sophia that he has discovered. Nor do I understand the suggestion concerning the *ktetoric* family group in St. Sophia (as delineated by Westervelt in 1651), namely, that Prince Jaroslav was holding the

model of the Tithe church, and that "if this assumption be true it will be difficult to agree with the reconstruction . . . of the Tithe Church made by Professor Conant" (p. 46). Surely, the normal thing is for Jaroslav to be holding the model of St. Sophia which, as founder, he is presenting to Christ. That the central figure of the group was originally Christ, and not Prince Vladimir in a fur coat, has been established by the latest investigations.<sup>4</sup>

The particulars in which St. Sophia is thought to depart from the Byzantine norm are the thirteen cupolas, the staircase tower (the second one was added later), and the "clustered" pillars in the gallery. The thirteen cupolas may indeed have been dictated by local taste, since the older wooden church of St. Sophia at Novgorod is known to have had thirteen "tops." As for the tower and the pillars (often considered as displaying Romanesque influence), I am not at all sure that they could not have been built by Byzantine architects. The "clustered" form had certainly penetrated Byzantine architecture, as can be seen from the pilasters of the contemporary church of St. George of the Mangana at Constantinople, built by Constantine Monomachus (1042-1054).<sup>5</sup> One of the many particulars that point to the direct participation of Byzantine builders in St. Sophia is the brickwork. The walls of St. Sophia are built in a very characteristic fashion: every alternate course of flat bricks, instead of coming flush with the surface of the wall, is set back slightly and then covered over with mortar, thus giving the illusion of excessively thick joints. This peculiar technique was given an Anatolian origin by Brunov;<sup>6</sup> why I cannot imagine, since not a single example of it, to my knowledge, occurs in Anatolia. Actually, there can be little doubt that it comes from Constantinople, where it is found in some twenty buildings, all the dated ones being of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. It is also common in nearby Nicaea. When found outside the capital region, as apparently in the church of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem (restorations of Constantine Monomachus)<sup>7</sup> or the church of St. Nicholas at Kuršumlija in Serbia (ca. 1168),<sup>8</sup> it probably points to the presence of masters from the capital. The same may be said of Russia, where this type of brickwork occurs, besides St. Sophia, in the added ambulatory of the Tithe church (ca. 1039), the Golden Gate at Kiev, the cathedral of Polotsk, etc. Also very typical of Constantinople (cf. St. Saviour Pantepoptes) is the discreet use of a meander frieze composed of bricks, such as has been found on the north wall and the drum of the main dome of St. Sophia. A similar meander existed on the church of St. Michael's monastery and

1. See V. N. Lazarev, *Nouvelles découvertes à la Cathédrale Saint (sic) Sophie de Kiev* (x. Congrès international d'études byzantines), Moscow, 1955.

2. See, for example, *Vizantijskij Vremennik*, III, 1950, pp. 154-200.

3. *Istorija Russkogo iskusstva* (Akademija Nauk SSSR), I, Moscow, 1953, pp. 135-136.

4. Lazarev, *op.cit.*, pp. 20-21.

5. R. Demangel and E. Mamboury, *Le quartier des Man-*

*ganes*, Paris, 1939, figs. 21, 22.

6. *Revue des études grecques*, XXXIX, 1926, p. 21; *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, XXVI, 1926, p. 361.

7. H. Vincent & F.-M. Abel, *Jérusalem*, II, 1-2, Paris, 1914, fig. 97; W. Harvey, *Church of the Holy Sepulchre Jerusalem*, Oxford, 1935, fig. 68.

8. G. Millet, *L'ancien art serbe: les églises*, Paris, 1919, fig. 40.



on another eleventh century church, of unknown name, excavated at Kiev in 1947.<sup>9</sup> Peculiarities of brickwork and masonry are essentially regional, and therefore constitute a fairly sensitive index to the national affiliations of the builders. In the case of St. Sophia there is thus a strong presumption in favor of the direct participation of Byzantine masters, unless one makes the unlikely assumption (as Brunov does) that local craftsmen kept abreast of the most recent minutiae of Byzantine architecture. The same is, of course, true also of the mosaics, sculpture and tessellated pavements; only some of the frescoes, like those of the towers, may be local works, and those seem, in any case, to be later. But even there, the Byzantine element is still predominant, as in the Hippodrome scenes. To suggest in this connection that the Grand Prince was not interested in Byzantine imperial ceremonies and preferred local scenes drawn from his own life (p. 131) is to misunderstand completely the mediaeval ideology. Besides, did Kiev have a full-fledged hippodrome, with imperial loge, *carceres*, and four competing circus parties?

It must be regretfully admitted that by limiting almost all its discussion to national claims, Mr. Powstenko's book does little to promote the scholarly study of St. Sophia. That is not to say that the book has no usefulness: as a compendium of past literature and little-known facts about the church, but especially by virtue of its illustrations, it will prove of considerable service.

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RUDOLF WITTKOWER, *The Sculptures of Gian Lorenzo Bernini*, New York, Phaidon, 1955. Pp. 255; 107 figs.; 122 pls. \$12.50.

The modern Bernini revival may be said to date from a great exhibition of his work held in Rome at the turn of the present century. On that occasion Stanislaw Frascchetti, a Venturi disciple, produced the weighty volume which has remained fundamental to Bernini research ever since. The quantities of documentary and broadly historical data the work contains, however, do not disguise a pervasive flaw; Frascchetti rather disapproved of Bernini's art, or at least his perception of it was obscured by the lingering theoretical prejudices of an earlier age. This was the objection raised, and probably somewhat overstated, by the great Riegl, whose lectures on Baldinucci's *Vita*, published posthumously, reflect a much deeper and more sympathetic insight.

In the rich bibliography on Bernini which has accumulated since that time, two contributions are outstanding. Years of meticulous labor in the labyrinthine archives of Rome, actually only begun and never wholly published, resulted ultimately (1927, 1931)

in the *Kunsttätigkeit unter Urban VIII* of Oskar Pollak. Devoted entirely to the documents of artistic production in Rome under Urban VIII, these two volumes provided the historian of Roman Baroque art, and of Bernini in particular, with a foundation in fact of paradigmatic breadth and reliability. The second major event was the joint publication in 1931 by Professor Wittkower, who had participated in the edition of Pollak's material, and Heinrich Brauer, of Bernini's sizeable legacy of drawings. In addition to presenting much new material, both visual and documentary, this was the first really comprehensive attempt to understand Bernini's art through the medium of his preparatory studies.

Professor Wittkower's new monograph on Bernini's sculpture thus appears against a somewhat lopsided historiographical setting. For while considerable development was taking place on the Continent, Bernini had hardly been introduced to the English-speaking public, scholarly or otherwise. One cause of this situation, and a formidable obstacle in the way of its correction, was the traditional Anglo-Saxon penchant for reticence and understatement in aesthetic matters; a laudable sentiment in some respects perhaps, but profoundly unberninesque. To meet the challenge, a neat summary and sound exposition, in English, was very much in order. It required, however, an author possessing at least one very special characteristic—absolute mastery of the truly formidable body of available information. Needless to say, such individuals are exceedingly rare; indeed, Wittkower may well be the only living example. Publication of any work by Wittkower has come to be recognized as an important event in the realm of art history. All factors have combined to make this especially true on the present occasion.

The book's arrangement follows a pattern by now well-established in the Phaidon monographs. There is a brief text, a more elaborate *catalogue raisonné*, and a copious body of illustrations which includes large plates as well as smaller supplementary figures.

The text is barely forty-three pages long; when we consider that it has to interpret the sculptural production of an artist whose career covered two generations, the extraordinary difficulties of the undertaking become apparent. The author has chosen to divide the material into typological groups, such as religious imagery, tombs and chapels, etc., which are discussed in a total of seven chapters. The reader is thereby spared the flood of monuments with which he would be faced in a purely chronological treatment; such a treatment would only mislead him in any case, since simultaneous undertakings, often widely divergent in character, were the rule rather than the exception in Bernini's studio. But most important, the typological plan illustrates the constancy of certain kinds of problems throughout Bernini's development. And since Wittkower conceives of Bernini as the great revolutionary, the destroyer of barriers *par excellence*, he can the more readily describe which barriers were destroyed

9. M. K. Karger, *Archeologičeskie issledovanija drevnego Kieva*, Kiev, 1951, pp. 223-224.

in each category, and by what means. His formal analyses are confined mainly to the "first" level of visual experience, dipping only when necessary into the infinite subtleties that lie beneath. He is thus ever-cognizant of the uninitiated, for whom he also defines with refreshing lucidity the peculiar visual and ideological terms in which Bernini's art must be understood.

The first chapter concerns Bernini's *juvenilia*. Discussion of these works is always crucial, since in them Bernini perpetrated his very first revolution; namely, that of resurrecting, before he was twenty-five, the entire moribund tradition of Roman sculpture. The need for a new general account of Bernini's youthful development has been rendered urgent in recent years by the researches of Italo Faldi, in the Borghese collection of the Vatican's Archivio Segreto; these findings have necessitated several conspicuous modifications in the canonical chronology of the Borghese figures. The most notable change involves the *David*; instead of 1619, as had been thought since Venturi's day, it must actually have been made ca. 1623, and thus comes after rather than before the *Rape of Proserpine*. The *Apollo and Daphne*, moreover, is not several years after the *David*, but contemporary with it, begun before and finished afterward. Once the point has been made, it becomes difficult to see how the *Pluto and Proserpine* could ever have been considered later than the *David*, so natural is the development in the opposite direction. Indeed, the entire evolution represented by the Borghese sculptures becomes much more meaningful, a fact which emerges clearly from Professor Wittkower's account.

Bernini advanced during this period with prodigious rapidity. In the few years that separate the *Aeneas and Anchises* from the *Rape of Proserpine*, he had already fought and won a major engagement. "Accurate realistic observation and genuine classical influence subordinated to Annibale's disciplined interpretation of the antique—that was the formula by which Bernini rid his style of the last vestiges of Mannerism." A certain optimum is reached almost immediately thereafter in the *David*, where the thin but impenetrable veil of consciousness that had separated representation from reality falls, and the two worlds freely intermingle. This quality is less pronounced in the *Apollo and Daphne*, (initiated, be it remembered, before the *David*), but is replaced by a keener penetration of "psycho-physical" dynamics which contrasts with the classicizing abstraction of the whole, and points unmistakably into the future. Wittkower summarizes Bernini's achievements in these early works in one splendid sentence which bespeaks the essence of his own contributions during a lifetime of thought, as well as the insights gained by a major segment of art-historical endeavour during the past fifty years (p. 8).

Bernini's figures of religious subjects are considered in the following chapter. His effort in this area involved primarily an adaptation of the dynamic energy and external focus attained earlier to the problems of spiritual expressiveness. At first individually, as in the *St. Bibiana* and *St. Longinus*, and then in complementary pairs,

like *Daniel* and *Habakkuk*, *Mary Magdalene* and *St. Jerome*, Bernini contrasts the varieties of religious experience that were as categories inherent in the Baroque mentality. "Herein seems to lie the secret of Bernini's spectacular success: it is through emotional identification with the mood symbolized in a figure that the faithful are led to submit to the ethos of the triumphant Counter-Reformation." In every case Wittkower explores the means whereby this effect of empathetical association is produced. He also demonstrates, in discussing the *Beata Lodovica Albertoni*, the changes that took place with Bernini's late development. Whereas the mature works are constructed primarily with diagonals, the dominating system here is one of verticals and horizontals. This principle Wittkower considers to be essentially classical, and he connects it with a general turn toward the austere and classical in several of the major Baroque artists around 1660.

The chapter on Bernini's portraits, together with the related entries in the catalogue, may easily constitute the most enduring scholarly contribution in the book. Nowhere better than in his portraits did Bernini reveal himself the archenemy of tradition's "injunctions." Yet, the subject has long cried for adequate treatment. Wittkower discusses incisively the critical development that occurs at the period of the *Longinus*, in the portraits of Scipione Borghese and Costanza Bonarelli. Here Bernini formulates that expansive, extroverted type which astounds by the immediacy of its contact, and catches the entire age in a moment unawares. Once achieved, this uncanny spontaneity was never lost, animating the Baker and Orsini busts in the teeth of studio assistance and a certain tendency to abstraction and planar simplification. Even these were but an overture to the *concerti grossi* Bernini fashioned in the portraits of Francesco I d'Este and Louis XIV. Less momentary perhaps, but more monumental and grandiose, they fully realize Bernini's unique conception of the "general cause vested in a great and powerful personality."

The basic problem arising in connection with Bernini's work for St. Peter's, discussed in the next chapter, is the extent to which the ultimate results were the product of a unified preconceived plan. Probably there will never be a precise answer to this question, since available evidence is conflicting. Two things are certain, however: that a complete transformation of the whole complex was envisaged from the outset, and that Bernini succeeded in harmonizing the disparate contributions of a host of enterprises which date back as far as the fifteenth century. To convey a sense of this unity, Wittkower turns *cicerone* and takes the reader on a tour that begins at the east side of the Tiber and ends before the vast, culminating spectacle of the *Cattedra Petri*. He creates a series of images filled with nostalgia for those who have been there, and envy for those who may have tried to verbalize their impressions in a few short sentences. The *Cattedra Petri* climaxes the whole, he emphasizes, through a complete fusion of colors, materials, and levels of relief; this fusion serves one overwhelming purpose, that of draw-



ing the observer inexorably into a "world which he shares with saints and angels."

In his chapels, which are treated in the fifth chapter, Bernini's primary effort again was to eliminate arbitrary visual and spiritual impediments that hinder the spectator's participation in the event portrayed. In the Cornaro chapel, for example, he establishes at least three realms of existence: members of the Cornaro family who appear in loges at the chapel's sides, a very literal depiction of St. Theresa's vision as she herself described it, and the glory of angels above. Bernini then proceeds by every possible means, including a concealed source of light, to interrelate these three realities so that the worshiper can communicate directly with personages whose orders of being are higher than his own. Naturally, the experience would be most effective when all the attendant circumstances could be controlled. And Wittkower points out that in each of the three churches which Bernini designed in their entirety (S. Tommaso at Castelgandolfo, the Assumption at Ariccia, and S. Andrea al Quirinale), the entire structure, including its decoration, is subordinated to a single religio-dramatic event.

In another remarkable paragraph Wittkower definitively annihilates the banal connotation of "theatricalism" which often accompanies the traditional association of Bernini's style with the Baroque stage. He explains the community of means, the community of effects and above all, the community of purpose that properly define a relationship to the theater (in which field Bernini was no less astonishing a creator than in sculpture).

With certain exceptions, the contributions of Mannerist principles are most strongly felt in the fountains and monuments, which are the subject of the following chapter. The naturalistic *bizzarerie* of sixteenth century garden sculpture supplied the essential freedom and even some of the motifs which Bernini monumentalized and placed on public view in the streets and piazzas of Rome. The real achievement, however, Wittkower once more finds in the reconciliation of elements normally incompatible. He shows how the movement, even the sound, of water unites in an integral whole with solid travertine and marble; and how, in the Four Rivers fountain, extremely naturalistic forms are used to represent a seemingly impossible static situation, creating thereby an impression which has at once the reality and unreality of a dream.

The last chapter deals with three of the broader problems that help to complete the outline of Bernini's development. The story of Bernini and his period is ultimately a simple one—by and large he created the period in his own image. Throughout his life, outside influences were more a matter of convenience than of necessity. Even the brief fall from favor during the early years of Innocent X's reign brought, as Wittkower observes, many of the purest expressions of Bernini's personal artistic manifesto. Analysis of the functional composition of Bernini's studio reveals his administrative genius and the extent of advanced preparation which he lavished on those commissions

that called for it. Nearly every member of the shop lent a hand in the tomb of Alexander VII, for instance; yet it has all the cohesion of a personally executed work. And unless he chose to relax his grip, Bernini was able to maintain this homogeneity despite the diversity of talent he employed. A separate study would be very useful here: as an aid in distinguishing the work of Bernini's own hand from that of his assistants, as a clarification of the channels through which Bernini's style was transmitted throughout Europe, and for an understanding of the progressive dissolution of the unity which Bernini created into the basic tendencies that evolved in the eighteenth century. Bernini's theory, such as it is, generally shows him steeped in the traditions of the Renaissance; yet elements of a more personal view also appear here and there in the sources. Wittkower rightly stresses that it is an error to consider the two attitudes incompatible. On the contrary, they complement one another, and both are indispensable in the procedure that underlay the final product.

The *catalogue raisonné*, finally, gives a complete picture of Bernini's work in sculpture. Considering the wealth of material at hand, it is a model of abridgement and clarity, and will provide an ideal point of reference for those who wish to delve further into Bernini's art. A great deal of new information is included, as are several new monuments, while a number of works receive more accurate dates than heretofore. The whole is supplemented by a chronological chart, which allows a most welcome bird's-eye view of the full range of Bernini's production.

A publication of this sort must discharge two obligations before all others. The brief text should be palatable to a very wide audience, while the catalogue, although longer, must deal with the minutiae of the subject. The region that lies between, which is the natural purview of interpretive art history, suffers perforce from neglect. Certainly no space can be given over to controversy or conjecture, which to many will seem little enough cause for regret. Besides, the work already wears two hats; a third would hardly be appropriate.

The condition is aggravated, however, by the very organization of the text. The typological plan, although it has the important advantages we noted above, inevitably sacrifices a sense of over-all developmental continuity. The reader must build a synthesis from isolated remarks dispersed here and there in the text. A summary does run through pp. 37-39; but as it is very brief, the author regrettably was forced to stint on several problems and to omit others altogether. Accordingly, the remarks which follow are offered to orient those who are not fully acquainted with the implications of some of Wittkower's views, and to recommend caution at certain points where the line between simplification and oversimplification may seem perilously tenuous.

We suspect, for example, that Bernini's art did not develop in quite so complete a vacuum with respect to his contemporaries and immediate predecessors as Witt-



kower's account might suggest. It is true that Mariani, Maderna, even Mochi, and others, are of interest now only to specialists in the field of Baroque sculpture; yet Bernini was certainly a specialist in the field, if nothing else. We mention only artists who were active at one time or another in Rome; those working in other centers may also have been significant, as Longhi suggested long ago. In the past, Wittkower himself has contributed much to our knowledge of these individuals, and he does make generic references to Giovanni Bologna and Mannerism here; but the maze of sixteenth and early seventeenth century traditions, in and out of Rome, is still far from sufficiently explored to permit of final conclusions. The same is largely true of painting. Wittkower recognizes, along with antiquity, the importance of Annibale Carracci, Guido Reni and Caravaggio for the early work; on the other hand, Bernini's continuing relationship to the painting of his own and previous generations receives little or no consideration. Such a relationship must have existed, although here again it might be premature to attempt a conclusive definition. Great things were going on in this sphere throughout Bernini's lifetime. It would be misleading to imply that he was unaware of them as regards his technique, his decorative schemes, and even certain of his individual figures. Caravaggio poses a further problem. His influence evidently goes much beyond the early physiognomical studies. While the two artists of course achieve very different results, the intense "realism" directed toward inducing an immediate emotional rapport between the spectator and the subject represented is common to them both. Moreover, the extremely suggestive religious associations which Walter Friedlaender has recently found in Caravaggio's art may indicate that considerable refinement is possible in our understanding of Bernini's response to the "fervent mysticism" of Loyola and the Jesuits.

In any case it is certain that Bernini's development was exceedingly complex. And the addition to his earliest oeuvre of the *St. Sebastian* in Lugano and the *St. Lawrence* in Florence occasions a curious situation which Wittkower does not discuss. In certain important respects these works contain fewer Mannerist or "Manniera" features than do the *Aeneas and Anchises* or even the *Pluto and Proserpine* which come later in Wittkower's chronology. The question has at least enough substance for one recent critic to postulate, indeed, that Bernini fell under his father's influence in the *Aeneas and Anchises*, after he had already broken away from it in the *St. Sebastian* and *St. Lawrence*;<sup>1</sup> not an impossible arrangement, but rather uncomfortable and in need of elucidation. Although elimination or even redating of the works may not be justified, we should wish to have Wittkower's views on the topic.

A kindred difficulty occurs with the decidedly "classical" trend in Bernini's development during the 1630's, witnessed by such monuments as that of Countess Matilda and the early stage of the *Pasce Oves Meas*. Bernini may indeed have been making certain "conces-

sions to a prevailing taste for classicism" (p. 37), but whether this alone suffices as an explanation of the phenomenon appears open to debate. In the first place there is the indubitable fact that classical (antique) art never ceased to be an inspiration. Moreover, it will be recalled that a work of such another stamp as the Bonarelli bust was executed during precisely the same period. Evidently, the interpretation of Bernini's entire development is involved, rather than merely a single phase having political implications. Perhaps it is only a matter of degree; in which case, however, it would seem all the more important to evaluate other hypotheses, such as those suggested by Bernini's conception of the appropriateness of form to content (to which the sources testify and Wittkower himself alludes when analysing the *St. Bibiana*, p. 9). Arguments could be found, for example, for an alternative of styles, or even a kind of stylistic continuum different aspects of which could be emphasized for different purposes. Probably the subject cannot be resolved apart from a consideration of Bernini's architecture, in itself and as it relates to his sculpture; but here we begin to detect a vicious circle.

Discussion seems warranted by Wittkower's designation of Bernini's late style, i.e. after 1660, as "classical" and related to a similar development in the production of other artists of the period. To begin with, we fear that some confusion may arise from using the same word to describe a work like the *Beata Lodovica Albertoni*, as the Countess Matilda monument, for example. Superficially at least, quite dissimilar styles are represented. There is of course a common ground; and it is sufficiently evident to reveal Wittkower's meaning to a trained art historian, whether or not he agrees that one name is applicable in both contexts. But we must sympathize with the consternation of the "general reader," who may not share with us the benefits of an imprecise vocabulary.

Vocabulary aside, however, the author aptly stresses the basic differences between mature works and late works such as the busts of Francesco I and Louis XIV, the *St. Theresa* and the *Beata Lodovica*; he has utterly absolved them from the taint of repetitiousness with which they have too often been slandered. And doubtless a tendency toward horizontals and verticals is among the more important distinctions. Yet it seems intended to provide a stabilizing element beneath other changes in the treatment of form itself which are possibly more important, and surely less susceptible to the term "classical." For the increased geometry of the underlying system was the necessary complement in the late style to a more radical dissolution of mass, wherein the marble is valued less for its volume than as the creator of patterns of light and dark. The question becomes one of determining which constituent of the style merits greater emphasis, and the decision we make is of some consequence. Pevsner also has found a marked turn around the same period in Italian painting, akin to this dissolution of form, however, rather

1. Faldi, *Galleria Borghese, Le sculture dal secolo XVI al XIX*, Rome, 1954, p. 28.

than Wittkower's change in structure, and moving in a very different direction from that of classicism.<sup>2</sup>

In the catalogue, as we have noted, the detailed entries on portraits are particularly valuable. The multitude of objects of this type blessed with Bernini's name in museums and collections throughout the world make for a perplexing state of affairs, which Wittkower has done much to clarify. Indeed, a number of recent efforts to connect existing monuments with statements in the sources have yielded gratifying results. We should maintain only a few reservations as to the extent of the master's participation. For example, the animated countenance of the early bust of Urban VIII in the Barberini collection (cat. no. 19, 1, pl. 32) indicates that Bernini was in the vicinity; but the expression itself has a trace of fatuousness, hardly compatible with his later conception of that magnificent Pope. Moreover, the somewhat textureless skin and vapid eyes recall the portrait of Urban without cap in S. Lorenzo in Fonte (cat. no. 19, 1a, fig. 16), where Wittkower recognizes the hand of Giulio Finelli. The bust of Francesco Barberini now in Washington (cat. no. 24a, fig. 27), while it has a finely structured head, is uneven technically and somehow lacks the expressive imaginativeness of works entirely by Bernini. The Doria portrait of Innocent X (cat. no. 51, 2, pl. 79) employs one of Bernini's devices for vitalizing the lower portions of his busts. He may therefore have been responsible for the basic design, and perhaps certain areas of the surface as well. Otherwise, the effect seems too bland, especially for a product of the later 1640's. Works such as these, despite unusual qualities and excellent references, cannot be equated with Bernini's best portrayals. It must be said in general, however, that a liberal policy in this realm is probably much the wisest until more extensive studies have been made of the individual members of Bernini's studio.

A later bust of Urban VIII in the Barberini collection (cat. no. 19, 2a, pl. 35, fig. 17), on the other hand, is an extremely moving characterization, though here exception may be taken to Wittkower's suggested dating (about 1630). One of the two related bronze casts (in Camerino) is documented 1643; and since the execution, the mood and age of the sitter are all closely linked to the bust of Urban in Spoleto (1640-1642), there is no compelling reason to assume that the marble original and the other bronze (Vatican Library) were produced more than a decade before.<sup>3</sup>

Concerning the composition of *Time discovering Truth*, of which only the figure of Truth was executed, it is often overlooked that the two descriptions we have of Bernini's intentions directly contradict each other. The earlier, and evidently the correct version, is contained in a letter of November 30, 1652, from Gemignano Poggi to Francesco I of Modena, where it is reported that Time was to be flying above to unveil Truth, who lay upon a rock (Fraschetti, p. 172). Years later, on the other hand, Bernini himself told Louis XIV that Time was to carry Truth up to the heavens

(Chantelou, ed. Lalanne, p. 116). The former situation is found, roughly, in a sketch in Leipzig (Brauer-Wittkower, pl. 20) and is implied in the work that has come down to us, though that particular drawing may not actually be a study for it. The arrangement Bernini describes, however, reverts essentially to the way in which the subject had been represented by painters in the first half of the century. In this fashion, for example, Domenichino had depicted *Time unveiling Truth* on the Apollo ceiling of the Palazzo Costaguti (ca. 1615, cf. L. Serra, *Domenichino*, fig. 43). Also interesting is the canvas for a ceiling in Richelieu's palace executed by Poussin shortly before he left Paris in 1642 (cf. Grautoff, *Poussin*, II, pl. 106). Presumably Bernini knew of the composition, and it may well have influenced the false and rather fantastic account of his own work that he gave to the French king.

Wittkower's interpretation of the documents pertaining to the Ponte Sant'Angelo is ingenious. The problem centers upon four statues, two now in S. Andrea delle Fratte by Bernini himself, and two "copies" which stand on the bridge. Wittkower makes a virtue of necessity in reconciling the usually reliable sources (Baldinucci and Domenico Bernini) which report that Bernini was surreptitiously responsible for a second version of the *Angel with the Inscription*, with the preserved payment to Giulio Cartari for that figure. We must assume that on two occasions artists were paid the full complement of 700 scudi (which the other sculptors received for their figures entire) for merely preparing the marble, which Bernini then finished. Yet this hypothesis does less violence than most to a perverse group of facts for which no consistent theory seems able to give a fully satisfying explanation. Moreover, the main conclusion of Wittkower's argument, that the *Angel with the Inscription* now on the bridge is ultimately a separate creation of Bernini himself, is undoubtedly true. However, the basic chronology presents a problem which should be considered.

I would find it hard to believe that the *Angel with the Inscription* on the bridge is actually a later conception than the one in S. Andrea. The similarity to its partner in disposition of both drapery and legs is inimical to the fundamental principles of differentiation that Bernini arrived at in the S. Andrea figures only after much experimentation. The design seems rather to be an offshoot from an earlier stage in the development, analogous to the composition which Bernini had provided for Lazzaro Morelli's *Angel with the Scourge*. It may be questioned whether any light can be shed on this paradoxical relation between "first" and "second" versions. The essential data are as follows:

1. November 11, 1667. Funds are set aside for redecoration of the bridge.
2. July 28, 1668. The Pope inspects the angels in Bernini's studio.

2. *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, VIII, 1932, pp. 69ff.

3. Cf. V. Martinelli, *Studi romani*, III, 1, 1955, p. 46;

further to Bernini portraiture, *idem*, "I busti berniniani di Paolo V, Gregorio XV e Clemente X," III, 6, 1955, pp. 647-666.



3. July 12, 1669. Paolo Naldini is paid for his copy of the *Angel with the Crown*.

4. September 11, 1669. Bernini is paid for one of his angels (Fraschetti, p. 370 n. 11, a document not mentioned by Wittkower).

5. November 13, 1669. Giulio Cartari is paid for his "copy" of the *Angel with the Inscription* (Wittkower considers that he only prepared the marble).

6. December 1, 1669. Paolo Bernini is referred to as having executed one of the original angels now in S. Andrea.

7. September 11, 1670. Paolo Bernini is paid, presumably for the same angel as in no. 6 (also preparation of the marble in Wittkower's view).

8. October 28, 1671. Bernini is reported as having "finally resolved to finish his angel."

Perhaps the most puzzling document is no. 7, which, granting Wittkower's assumptions, would suggest that Paolo Bernini prepared the marble for an original angel as one of the latest steps in the operations. If, as seems most likely for a number of reasons, this payment refers to the original *Angel with the Inscription*, it would follow that the preparation of that figure was completed only after both the copy (doc. no. 3) and the original (doc. no. 4) of the *Angel with the Crown* had been finished, and even after Cartari had prepared the second version of *Angel with the Inscription* (doc. no. 5). This would make it entirely understandable, chronologically speaking, that the Cartari-Bernini substitute should include features which are antecedent to Bernini's final solution for the pair. In any case, it appears that both substitutes were begun before their respective originals were finished. Indeed one begins to wonder how seriously it was ever intended to mount Bernini's angels on the bridge, at least in their present form. They are so highly finished, much more so than the other figures on the bridge, as to raise *a priori* the doubt that Bernini would have gone so far at a time when he was still expecting them to be placed in the open.

The book is practically free of minor errors or omissions, as far as this reviewer can judge. Worth mentioning perhaps are only the fact that the fragmentary terracotta head in a Roman private collection (cat. no. 18, p. 184), originally published as being for the *Daphne* (Colasanti, *Bollettino d'arte*, III, 1923/4, pp. 416ff.), is actually related to the head of *Proserpine* (indicated by the tears, *ibid.*, fig. p. 418, printed in reverse; E. Zocca, *Arti figurative*, I, 1945, p. 158); and that Bernini's designs for the fountains at Sassuolo, carried out by Raggi in part, are rather precisely datable, August 1652 (cat. no. 80, 6, p. 243; cf. Fraschetti, p. 229 n. 2 and 3).

A word must be said concerning the illustrations. With 122 full-size plates and 98 supporting illustrations inserted into the catalogue, the work gives one of the richest visual documentations of Bernini's sculpture presently available. The publishers rendered noble service by having made a goodly number of new photographs; these on the whole are excellent, and contribute substantially to an illustrational problem which, as every-

body recognizes, only a corpus of several volumes could adequately solve. The details especially are striking (e.g. pls. 6, 39, 53, 88, 114), and exploit with real sensitivity Bernini's textural and chiaroscuro nuances. Unfortunately, however, the whole series appears to have been subjected to a process of reproduction which fairly pulverizes the surfaces and eliminates plastic modulations. The effects in many cases are hardly noticeable, but in others they are very damaging indeed (e.g. pls. 3, 9, 35, 61). Reproductions are never perfect, and a certain amount of touching-up was unavoidable, even excusable; except in one instance where, surely through an oversight, the "restorer's" pencil marks were left blatantly in evidence (pl. 8, around the eyes). The publishers might have taken greater care to maintain their own high standards and do justice to the photographs themselves, as well as to the text.

These blemishes are all but overshadowed, however, by the author's choice of plates for juxtaposition and comparison. Words being extremely precious, it is not surprising to find photographic comparisons used to supplement the text, to suggest to the reader special points for meditation, and to serve as silent witnesses to the author's arguments. Wittkower's selections are often particularly evocative; if nothing of Bernini's whole oeuvre were preserved except the two photographs of the head of Constantine's horse and that of Gabriele Fonseca (pls. 111 and 112), proof would yet be ample that here was "one of the greatest artists of all Christendom."

In the last analysis, some of our considerations, although pertinent to Wittkower's subject, may reach beyond its scope. Even so, perhaps they will suggest the magnitude of our loss in the author's decision to abandon his plan for a definitive treatment of Bernini's art. But also, they should indicate the complexity of the problems with which he has dealt in so concise and orderly a fashion. Fortunate indeed are those who see Bernini's sculpture for the first time through Wittkower's eyes.

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(*pro tempore*)

TALBOT HAMLIN, *Benjamin Henry Latrobe*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1955. Pp. 633; 35 figs.; 40 pls. \$15.00.

Historians have noted for some years the surprising lack of a definitive biography and critical work for one of the great American architects. While Sir Christopher Wren has had more than a dozen books devoted to him, and many another English and American architect of far less stature has evoked the sympathies of diligent biographers, Benjamin Henry Latrobe has been recognized only by small articles and incomplete publications of his journals. And yet, until after the Civil War, no other architect produced better designs, built more important buildings, or influenced a finer crop of young architects than Latrobe. Thus there is surely no need



to justify the publication of this book. On the contrary, we have been waiting for it for decades to close the gap between the studies of the eighteenth century carpenter-builders and of their successors, the recognized professional architects, who were responsible for separating us forever from the last influences of the Renaissance in Colonial American architecture.

Had a less competent biographer undertaken to draw together all the complex events of his life, Latrobe might easily have been misunderstood or superficially treated. In Hamlin's hands the architect has been fairly and fully described in all his American activities, social, political, and architectural.

There were two major difficulties which the author had to overcome in relation to the biographical material; first, the necessity for writing at some length, with insufficient data, on the early life and training of the architect in England; secondly, the need to reduce and clarify for the impatient modern reader an overwhelmingly large number of letters, journals, government and private documents relating to the architect's life in America. The result is a quantitative lack of balance in the biography between Latrobe's English and American careers. For the larger part of Latrobe's life—in fact, the first thirty-one years, which were naturally formative to a very great degree—was spent in England and on the Continent. His contributions to the English landscape were abysmally insignificant. Hammerwood Lodge is ill-proportioned and dull; Ashdown House, though showing few signs of genius, is acceptable; and that is all there is. Except for his somewhat irregular apprenticeship (he never attended the Royal Academy, as did George Hadfield, nor did he receive a professional diploma of any kind), and his acquisition of a cultured taste in the field, he actually had few of the usual qualifications for becoming a great architect. But there is no doubt that he soon made up for his deficiencies upon his arrival in America. Professor Hamlin's wholehearted enthusiasm for his protagonist is right, if the architect's career is considered in its entirety. Of his English work alone it is an indulgence to say, "We can see him already original, accomplished, and thoroughly prepared for larger and more demanding work. We can see him as an architect doing distinguished houses . . . how stupid, how malicious, and above all how completely unfounded seem his Washington enemies' attacks upon him later as an untrained bungler." It is unfair to see only malice in the bitter castigations heaped upon Latrobe by his clever adversary William Thornton, for there is some truth in his statement that Latrobe was only a carver of chimney pieces in London. While there is no evidence that I know of to support Thornton's contention, Latrobe himself was willing to admit, to his brother, that he had acquired little fame as an architect among his English contemporaries. One might easily argue that his literary talents far outnumbered his architectural ones, for several of his books were published and sold, while his English building career ended in bankruptcy!

It will probably be impossible ever to fill in the gaps in our knowledge of Latrobe's early life, but there are

a few details which may be added to Professor Hamlin's account and some corrections to be made in it. After returning in 1784 to London from the Continent, where he received his formal education, Latrobe is supposed to have entered the Stamp Office at Somerset House. Professor Hamlin says he stayed there for only a few months. Yet, as late as May 1788, he wrote a letter to Arthur Young, the agriculturalist, giving his address as the Stamp Office. Again, if he worked for John Smeaton it was for only a matter of months or at odd hours, for soon after leaving the Stamp Office he was apparently in the office of the architect Samuel Pepys Cockerell. If Latrobe began his architectural apprenticeship late in 1788, and it could hardly have been sooner, then he had very little to do with the plans for Admiralty House (not Building) in Whitehall. Cockerell had the commission as early as 1786 and the building was finished by 1791. Latrobe may have worked as a minor draftsman, but he could hardly have had a more important position on this job because all the documents signed by Cockerell's assistants at the Admiralty House bear other signatures—never does Latrobe's name appear. Professor Hamlin mentions "the young architect's rapid rise in Cockerell's office," as though this were a well-known fact, yet not once in the known letters and documents coming out of Cockerell's office is Latrobe mentioned. In fact our only source for knowing that he ever was in Cockerell's office is a letter written by Latrobe himself eighteen years after his arrival in America. Here he says that he was in Cockerell's office for three years, presumably from 1788 to 1791. Also, the architect's father, Benjamin Latrobe, died not at Teston, but in London, four weeks after returning from Teston where he had become ill (p. 28). And among the references to his literary endeavors it should have been added that Latrobe edited the writings of Quintin Craufurd and of George Livius, brother of the Mrs. Hoissard whose daughters scandalized London society.

Latrobe's life in America is magnificently documented by the long series of polygraph letters faithfully kept and treasured by the Latrobe family. Professor Hamlin's task was therefore not so much to gather the material as to sort it, so that the myriad threads could be woven into a comprehensive and easily understood story. This he has done with great competence and enthusiasm. Rarely is an author able to write so much that is new into the biography of an already well-known person.

While describing Latrobe's early houses in America, Professor Hamlin strives to show in what ways Latrobe contributed his genius to building. The author claims unique qualities for the designs particularly with regard to the architect's insistence on "qualities of privacy and of efficient service." Here it is hard to agree. The basis for most of the designs can be found in the contemporary source books for architects, and in the work of Soane, Cockerell, and other London architects with whose works Latrobe was quite familiar. Were there any prominent London architects who were not interested in such commonplace ideas as privacy and effi-

ciency? In spite of the fact that Latrobe's large personal library of architectural books was lost at sea, it was quite possible for him to consult many of the same books in America, in such a well-stocked library as that of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

Latrobe's famous Philadelphia waterworks, the surprise of the decade when they actually performed as advertised, gave him the standing as an engineer which led later to his employment on numerous water schemes such as canals and steamboats. It may be interesting to add here that one of the wooden pipes laid by Latrobe to carry the water pumped by his steam engines to various parts of the city is still preserved in the Franklin Institute.

Both Nassau Hall at Princeton University and Old West at Dickinson College could have been more thoroughly treated. Nassau Hall's story is of considerable interest, yet it is allotted only one short paragraph. In the case of Old West also, more might have been written, and why has the reason for Latrobe's making any designs at all for Dickinson College been left out? The original entrance for students was, as is stated, to the north, but there was also a central southern entrance, perhaps meant for use on special occasions. There were never any rooms to the north of the off-center corridor, except in the wings, and contrary to what Professor Hamlin says, their depth is equal to those rooms to the south of the corridor. East and west entrance doors have now been added and the large southern hall has certainly been refurbished. Furthermore, there are more decorative features than Professor Hamlin is willing to admit. There is a large panel with an inscription on the slightly projecting south front, and the central door is far from plain. Under the clinging ivy there are beautiful red sandstone sills, and quoins of the same material at the corners of the building.

Latrobe's unsuccessful Pittsburgh venture was filled with disappointment, mainly because of the architect's insecure arrangements with Robert Fulton, who, like other noteworthy inventors, was not satisfied with verbal credit for his genius but wished to capitalize on his talents to an extent beyond his means. Fulton was brilliant as an engineer, but one loses respect for a man whose character did not measure up to his ability. The circumstances of the transaction in steamboats between Fulton and Latrobe, well described in this chapter, led to financial disaster for Latrobe and engendered much bad feeling. In spite of the good description of the steamboat affair, it seems probable that the author might have gathered more material for this chapter on Latrobe's architectural activities at Pittsburgh. The buildings are neglected as to form and constructional details, and their owners remain names without personalities.

Inevitably in such a long compilation of biographical and critical material an author will be incorrect in a number of places. In order that some of these errors may be righted the following emendations are given. Ashdown House has a circular not semi-circular entrance portico (p. 44). Latrobe first met Jefferson

(p. 93) not in November 1798 in Fredericksburg, but at the end of March 1798 at Philadelphia when they probably discussed architectural commissions which Latrobe might get in Virginia. Philip Mazzei in negotiating for the carving of a statue of *Liberty* (p. 267) did not discover that Canova's price was too high, but rather that Canova was in Vienna and had enough commissions to keep him busy for the next ten years. Further, Canova would certainly not have attempted at his age the crossing of the Atlantic to America, and no good sculptor would make a model and not finish the work himself. It was Thorwaldsen's price which was fantastically high. The wrong date is given for the letter of Latrobe to Lenthall in which the unfortunate dinner for the workmen at the Capitol is discussed. It should be October 17 not 7 (p. 276). John Lenthall, Latrobe's clerk of the works at the Capitol, is said by Professor Hamlin (note p. 278) to have built two houses at 612 and 614 Nineteenth Street, N.W. which, he says, "stood until comparatively recent times." These he further states were built on speculation. However, if I am not mistaken, these houses, really one house divided into two, are still standing, and Lenthall actually lived in one. The other, if they were originally two houses, may have been a speculation. The House of Representatives was never built in the form of an oval (p. 440), except for a temporary structure referred to uncomfortably as the "oven." Latrobe's prewar design was a rectangular central area abutted by two semicircles. Thornton intended to construct an oval room, but Latrobe persuaded Jefferson to allow a change. Surely Latrobe on his way to Washington, Pa., in January 1820 did not pass through Williamsport (p. 522). According to the index, the Foster mentioned on page 313 as a secretary of the British embassy and later ambassador, is Augustus Foster. Professor Hamlin supposes that the Latrobes had social access to the embassy through this man, for he is said to have married an English cousin of Latrobe's. Presumably the man referred to is Sir Augustus John Foster (1780-1848), who became the British minister to America in August of 1811, and who returned to England, having failed in his mission, just as the war broke out in 1812. Actually it was a relative of Augustus Foster, a William Foster, who married not an English cousin of Latrobe's but his sister Anna Eleanor Latrobe. Regardless of the genealogical error, it is unlikely that the Latrobes were closely associated with Foster in Washington after he was appointed as ambassador, for Latrobe had by then ceased to work on the Capitol, his major architectural effort. Furthermore, Latrobe was speaking in 1811 of the "insolence of Foster." This must mark the termination of any pleasant relations they may have had earlier. One additional correction may be made in what Latrobe himself says (p. 422). When he was hired to rebuild Nassau Hall at Princeton after the fateful fire, he roofed it with sheet iron. Some time later he said of his work: "I have not heard or observed a single objection to it, and the roof of Princeton College, as far as I have information, is as good as the day when it was put on. . . ." This was far from the truth. The trustees

of Princeton complained bitterly that the roof leaked badly and attempted to have Latrobe do something about it. It is possible that their letters never reached Latrobe, but it seems unlikely that he never heard anything more of the matter.

The publishers should be commended for taking the responsibility of printing a long book in a field where a large buying public might not be found. They are justly rewarded in having selected a book which has deservedly taken more than one prize (including the Pulitzer prize and the annual award of the Society of Architectural Historians). On the other hand, had cost not been a factor, it would have been more helpful to the scholar and more exciting to the casual reader to have produced a better set of plates. Some are soft and blurred, others too small, though a generous number were allowed. Unfortunately no system of reference to the plates was used, so that the reader must search for the plates matching the monuments

in one or another of the sections where they are grouped. This difficulty could easily have been avoided by using small marginal plate references. Although explanatory and useful notes appear at the bottom of almost every page, still there is much information of a very elementary kind lacking, such as the present location of letters and documents. A scholar needs this data and should not be obliged to retrace the author's steps in order to find it. Also, in a volume so complete in most ways, it would have been appropriate to have included a bibliography of writings on Latrobe.

This long awaited biography presents a clear and thoughtful portrait of a foremost American architect against the background of his age. Professor Hamlin's devoted and scholarly labors have produced a major contribution to the history of American architecture.

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INDEX TO VOLUME XXXVIII



# INDEX TO VOLUME XXXVIII

- Ackerman, James S., review of H. Siebenhuener, *Das Kapitol in Rom, Idee und Gestalt*, 53-57
- Alberti, Leone Battista, *Ten Books on Agriculture*, trans. by J. Leoni, ed. by J. Rykwert, reviewed by D. R. Coffin, 57-58
- Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient, The*, reviewed by E. Porada, 121-124
- Benesch, Otto, *The Drawings of Rembrandt*, Vols. I and II, reviewed by J. Rosenberg, 63-70
- Benisovich, Michel N., *The Drawings of Stradanus (Jan van der Straeten) in The Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration*, New York, 249-251
- Bernheimer, Richard, *Theatrum Mundi*, 225-247
- Bier, Justus, *St. Andrew in the Work of Tilman Riemenschneider*, 215-223
- Chang, Amos Ih Tiao, *The Existence of Intangible Content in Architectonic Form*, reviewed by A. Gowans, 127-129
- Coffin, David R., review of L. B. Alberti, *Ten Books on Architecture*, trans. by J. Leoni, ed. by J. Rykwert, 57-58
- Cooke, Hereward Lester, Jr., *The Documents Relating to the Fountain of Trevi*, 149-173
- Coolidge, John, review of K. Lankheit, *Die Zeichnungen des kurpfälzischen Hofbildhauers Paul Egell*, 199-203
- Coor-Achenbach, Gertrude, *The "Missing" Panel from a Dispersed Polyptych by the Badia a Isola Master*, 119
- Dale, William S. A., *An English Crosier of the Transitional Period*, 137-141
- Davidson, J. Le Roy, review of H. Zimmer, *The Art of Indian Asia: Its Mythology and Transformations*, 124-127
- Ehrlich, George, *Chautauqua 1880-1900: Education in Art History and Appreciation*, 175-184
- Fisher, M. Roy, *Assisi, Padua, and the Boy in the Tree*, 47-52
- Frankfort, Henri, *The Birth of Civilization in the Near East*, reviewed by E. Porada, 121-124
- Friedlaender, Walter, *Caravaggio Studies*, reviewed by W. Stechow, 58-63
- Frühmittelalterliche Kunst in den Alpenländern*, ed. by L. Birchler, et al., reviewed by R. Krautheimer, 130-133
- Gowans, Alan, review of A. I. T. Chang, *The Existence of Intangible Content in Architectonic Form*, 127-129
- Grippi, Rosalind, *A Sixteenth Century Bozzetto*, 143-147
- Hamlin, Talbot, *Benjamin Henry Latrobe*, reviewed by P. F. Norton, 260-263
- Johnson, James R., *Modern and Mediaeval Stained Glass: A Microscopic Comparison of Two Fragments*, 185-186
- Krautheimer, Richard, review of *Frühmittelalterliche Kunst in den Alpenländern*, ed. by L. Birchler, et al., 130-133
- Lankheit, Klaus, *Die Zeichnungen des kurpfälzischen Hofbildhauers Paul Egell*, reviewed by J. Coolidge, 199-203
- Lavin, Irving, review of R. Wittkower, *The Sculptures of Gian Lorenzo Bernini*, 255-260
- Magurn, R. S., trans. and ed., *The Letters of Peter Paul Rubens*, reviewed by J. R. Martin, 199
- Mango, Cyril, review of G. Millet, *La Peinture du moyen âge en Yougoslavie (Serbie, Macédoine et Monténégro)*, and *Yugoslavia, Mediaeval Frescoes*, preface by D. T. Rice, introd. by S. Radojčić, 197-198; review of O. Powstenko, *The Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev*, 253-255
- Martin, John Rupert, *Immagini della Virtù: The Paintings of the Camerino Farnese*, 91-112; review of *The Letters of Peter Paul Rubens*, trans. and ed. by R. S. Magurn, 199
- Mayer, L. A., *Islamic Architects and their Works*, reviewed by D. N. Wilber, 253
- Meiss, Millard, *The Exhibition of French Manuscripts of the XIII-XVI Centuries at the Bibliothèque Nationale*, 187-196
- Millet, Gabriel, *La Peinture du moyen âge en Yougoslavie (Serbie, Macédoine et Monténégro)*, reviewed by C. Mango, 197-198
- Norton, Paul F., review of T. Hamlin, *Benjamin Henry Latrobe*, 260-263
- Porada, Edith, review of H. Frankfort, *The Birth of Civilization in the Near East*, and *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient*, 121-124
- Powstenko, Olexa, *The Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev*, reviewed by C. Mango, 253-255
- Rosenbaum, Elizabeth, *The Evangelist Portraits of the Ada School and their Models*, 81-90
- Rosenberg, Jakob, review of O. Benesch, *The Drawings of Rembrandt*, Vols. I and II, 63-70
- Scherer, Margaret R., *Marvels of Ancient Rome*, reviewed by E. Sjöqvist, 129-130
- Segall, Berta, *Notes on the Iconography of Cosmic Kingship*, 75-80
- Shorr, Dorothy C., *The Role of the Virgin in Giotto's "Last Judgment"*, 207-214
- Siebenhuener, Herbert, *Das Kapitol in Rom, Idee und Gestalt*, reviewed by J. S. Ackerman, 53-57
- Sizer, Theodore, *Col. John Trumbull's Works: A Final Report*, 113-117



- Sjöqvist, Erik, review of M. R. Scherer, *Marvels of Ancient Rome*, 129-130
- Stechow, Wolfgang, review of W. Friedlaender, *Caravaggio Studies*, 58-63
- Tselos, Dimitri, *A Greco-Italian School of Illuminators and Fresco Painters: Its Relation to the Principal Reims Manuscripts and to the Greek Frescoes in Rome and Castelseprio*, 1-30
- Vermeule, Cornelius C., *The Dal Pozzo-Albani Drawings of Classical Antiquities: Notes on their Content and Arrangement*, 31-46
- Wilber, Donald N., review of L. A. Mayer, *Islamic Architects and their Works*, 253
- Wittkower, Rudolf, *The Sculptures of Gian Lorenzo Bernini*, reviewed by I. Lavin, 255-260
- Yugoslavia, *Mediaeval Frescoes*, preface by D. T. Rice, introd. by S. Radojčić, reviewed by C. Mango, 197-198
- Zimmer, Heinrich, *The Art of Indian Asia: Its Mythology and Transformations*, reviewed by J. Le R. Davidson, 124-127

## AESTHETICS AND CRITICISM

- Gowans, A., review of A. I. T. Chang, *The Existence of Intangible Content in Architectonic Form*, 127-129

## AMERICAN ART

- Norton, P. F., review of T. Hamlin, *Benjamin Henry Latrobe*, 260-263
- Sizer, T., *Col. John Trumbull's Works: A Final Report*, 113-117

## ANTIQUITY

- Sjöqvist, E., review of M. R. Scherer, *Marvels of Ancient Rome*, 129-130

## BAROQUE AND CLASSIC ART

- Benisovich, M. N., *The Drawings of Stradanus (Jan van der Straeten) in The Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration, New York*, 249-251
- Cooke, H. L., Jr., *The Documents Relating to the Fountain of Trevi*, 149-173
- Coolidge, J., review of K. Lankheit, *Die Zeichnungen des kurpfälzischen Hofbildhauers Paul Egell*, 199-203
- Lavin, I., review of R. Wittkower, *The Sculpture of Gian Lorenzo Bernini*, 255-260
- Martin, J. R., *Immagini della Virtù: The Paintings of the Camerino Farnese*, 91-112; review of *The Letters of Peter Paul Rubens*, trans. and ed. by R. S. Magurn, 199
- Rosenberg, J., review of O. Benesch, *The Drawings of Rembrandt*, Vols. I and II, 63-70
- Stechow, W., review of W. Friedlaender, *Caravaggio Studies*, 58-63
- Vermeule, C. C., *The Dal Pozzo-Albani Drawings of Classical Antiquities: Notes on their Content and Arrangement*, 31-46

## EARLY CHRISTIAN ART

- Tselos, D., *A Greco-Italian School of Illuminators and Fresco Painters: Its Relation to the Principal Reims Manuscripts and to the Greek Frescoes in Rome and Castelseprio*, 1-30

## EDUCATION

- Ehrlich, G., *Chautauqua 1880-1900: Education in Art History and Appreciation*, 175-184

## FAR EASTERN ART

- Davidson, J. Le R., review of H. Zimmer, *The Art of Indian Asia: Its Mythology and Transformations*, 124-127

## ICONOGRAPHY

- Bernheimer, R., *Theatrum Mundi*, 225-247
- Segall, B., *Notes on the Iconography of Cosmic Kingship*, 75-80

## MEDIAEVAL ART

- Coor-Achenbach, G., *The "Missing" Panel from a Dispersed Polyptych by the Badia a Isola Master*, 119
- Dale, W. S. A., *An English Crosier of the Transitional Period*, 137-141
- Fisher, M. R., *Assisi, Padua, and the Boy in the Tree*, 47-52
- Krautheimer, R., review of *Frühmittelalterliche Kunst in den Alpenländern*, ed. by L. Birchler, et al., 130-133
- Mango, C., review of G. Millet, *La Peinture du moyen âge en Yougoslavie (Serbie, Macédoine et Monténégro)*, and *Yugoslavia, Mediaeval Frescoes*, preface by D. T. Rice, introd. by S. Radojčić, 197-198
- Meiss, M., *The Exhibition of French Manuscripts of the XIII-XVI Centuries at the Bibliothèque Nationale*, 187-196
- Rosenbaum, E., *The Evangelist Portraits of the Ada School and their Models*, 81-90
- Shorr, D. C., *The Role of the Virgin in Giotto's "Last Judgment,"* 207-214

## NEAR EASTERN ART

- Porada, E., review of H. Frankfort, *The Birth of Civilization in the Near East*, and *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient*, 121-124

Wilber, D. N., review of L. A. Mayer, *Islamic Architects and their Works*, 253

RENAISSANCE ART

Ackerman, J. S., review of H. Siebenhuener, *Das Kapitäl in Rom, Idee und Gestalt*, 53-57

Bier, J., *St. Andrew in the Work of Tilmann Riemenschneider*, 215-223

Coffin, D. R., review of L. B. Alberti, *Ten Books on Architecture*, trans. by J. Leoni, ed. by J. Rykwert, 57-58

Grippi, R., *A Sixteenth Century Bozzetto*, 143-147

RUSSIAN ART

Mango, C., review of O. Powstenko, *The Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev*, 253-255

STAINED GLASS

Johnson, J. R., *Modern and Mediaeval Stained Glass: A Microscopic Comparison of Two Fragments*, 185-186





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